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CONFIDENTIAL.

(6824.)

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6823.]

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6823.]

No. 1.

Memorandum communicated by M. Metaxas, April 2, 1896.

LE journal "Nea Imera" de Trieste, dans son numéro du 16 Février, a publié un extrait du rapport adressé au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique par son Consul à Trébizonde, qui expose, entre autres, que des Turcs armés ainsi que des soldats aidés par des Hellènes et des Persans, avaient commencé par préméditation et d'une façon systématique à piller les maisons, les boutiques, et les magasins (dépôts) des Arméniens et à tuer ceux qui montraient de la résistance.

Les renseignements contenus dans cet extrait sont loin de la vérité, vu que, d'après des informations dignes de toute foi, les Chrétiens Hellènes s'étaient réfugiés, à l'heure des massacres et des pillages, dans leurs foyers, et qu'un seul individu, originaire de Kromni, sous le nom de Christo, connu d'ailleurs comme incurable alcoolique et comme rénégat, fut aperçu parmi les agresseurs ne portant pas d'armes sur lui et se trouvant en état d'ivresse.

Mais même dans le cas où l'individu en question ou d'autres de ces pareils auraient commis de tels actes de cruauté, Mr. Longworth n'aurait pas dû accuser l'élément Hellénique à Trébizonde, lequel s'est prêté à plusieurs reprises à venir en aide aux familles Arméniennes.

Il serait donc juste et équitable, à la suite des accusations si injustement portées contre les Hellènes de Trébizonde par Mr. Longworth, qu'une satisfaction leur soit donnée aussi entière qu'a été l'acte d'accusation et dont la publicité servira d'en effacer les traces.

No. 2.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 61.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 2, 1896.

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram No. 120 of the 31st ultimo, I have to inform you that orders have been given for Her Majesty's ship "Barfleur" to proceed to the Bay of Antioch.

No. 3.

Consul-General Wood to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 9. Secret.) *Tabriz, March 16, 1896.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch on the subject of the endeavours made by the Representative of a certain Power to raise disturbances between the Mahommedan and Christian subjects of the Shah, and of the preparations of a threatening character which are reported as being made by the Kurds on the frontier to the west of the Plain of Salmas, I have now the honour to transmit information which I have gathered showing that matters are likely to be complicated by the recent action of the Armenian Revolutionary Alliance, which has dispatched several members to these parts.

The names of these persons are as follows:—

Hakop Khazariantz.
Haratoun Khughasiantz.
Dr. Khatchatour Ohvaniantz.
Ervand Khazariantz.
Mlle. Sathynic Mathyniantz.
Mlle. Papiantz.
Grigor Maliantz.

All these, with the exception of Dr. Khatchatour Ohvaniantz, who is said to have left Tabriz on the 12th instant for Salmas with several other revolutionary members whose names I cannot give, are still at Tabriz.

I cannot understand why the presence and intentions of these people have not been noticed in any way by the Russian Consulate-General, which a few months ago showed a certain activity in arresting and deporting to Russia some Russian Armenian artisans established in Tabriz who had been pointed out to them as members of various revolutionary Committees engaged in sending arms and ammunition to Armenia.

I have obtained the above information with some difficulty owing to the threats which have been already launched against informers by these newly-arrived and intending disturbers of the peace, whose followers in Tabriz are said to amount to some hundreds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

No. 4.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 240.) *Constantinople, March 27, 1896.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting that comparative tranquillity prevailed there during Bairam.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Beyrout, March 20, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 1st instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Bairam feast passed off with comparative tranquillity in Beyrout.

Several disputes occurred between Moslems and Christians, two of which ended in bloodshed, but order was speedily restored by the police.

The trial of the assassins was adjourned until after the feast, and I was yesterday informed by the Governor-General that the matter would not be longer delayed.

His Excellency mentioned that the only condemnatory evidence against the accused was obtained from the depositions of one of the victims, Yussef Hani, but the Christian witnesses who were examined by the Juge d'Instruction were either unable or disinclined to identify the prisoners.

Under these circumstances there will probably be insufficient evidence at the trial to convict the accused according to their deserts.

I have no doubt that the guilty parties would be easily identified if the witnesses were not intimidated by fear of revenge, and well aware that however severe the penalty might be, the prisoners would in all probability have their crimes condoned and be at large long before the expiration of their sentences.

The Vali has exiled to Acre three Christians accused of riotous conduct at the funerals, and he has also taken the opportunity of banishing to the same place three Moslems of notoriously bad character.

A large number of Christians would have been arrested and summarily exiled had they not evaded the police by seeking refuge in the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 5.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 241.) *Constantinople, March 27, 1896.*

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 221 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to call your Lordship's attention to one of the difficulties experienced by the missionaries who are engaged in the work of relieving the destitute Armenians, namely, that the Kurds either prevent the distribution of money or seize it as soon as it is distributed. This state of things is, however, only reported from the Vilayet of Kharput and some parts of the district of Talori, and I trust that my representations, reported to your Lordship, may have been instrumental in effecting an amelioration.

Another somewhat serious difficulty has been raised by the action of the Turkish authorities, chiefly in the Vilayet of Bitlis. Early in January complaints reached this Embassy and the American Legation to the effect that the local officials insisted on distributing the relief money themselves. I brought this contention to the notice of the Sublime Porte, and succeeded in inducing the Minister for Foreign Affairs to send orders that the local authorities should merely have cognizance of the manner in which the relief was distributed, but that the money should not pass through their hands nor its expenditure be in any way controlled by them. Shortly afterwards a Mussulman Relief Commission was appointed by the Sultan. An idea of the principles likely to guide its action may be formed by the fact that most of its members were Mussulman ecclesiastics, and that its first proceeding was to divide the funds at its disposal into two halves—one for distribution to the indigent, and the other for repairing mosques injured by Christians during the recent disturbances. I received, however, no complaints about the interference of the Committee until about the 20th of this month, when Mr. Cole telegraphed from Bitlis that the local authorities again refused to allow him to distribute relief, and insisted on his handing his funds over to the Turkish Commission. I, at the same time, received a protest from the Constantinople Relief Committee, with whom Mr. Cole had communicated by telegraph, saying that they were unanimously of opinion that it would be better to return the subscriptions to England than to allow the Turkish Commission to distribute the money. I accordingly caused representations to be made at the Palace and Porte, which were at first not very successful, as the only answer I could obtain was that an Imperial Iradé had been issued ordering that all money should be distributed through the medium of the Turkish Commission. I therefore called personally on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the 25th, and urged him to have orders issued for the distribution of the money by missionaries as heretofore, seeing that otherwise the Constantinople Committee were determined to discontinue their remittances.

The same evening I received from his Excellency the private letter, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith, stating that, according to the declaration of the Grand Vizier, it is not necessary that the money should be distributed by the Turkish Commission, but merely that a member of the Commission should be present

at the distribution. As there seems to be no objection to this arrangement, I trust that the matter may be regarded as satisfactorily settled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir P. Currie.

Mon cher Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le 25 Mars*, 1896.

A LA suite de notre entretien d'aujourd'hui, je me suis empressé de parler au Grand Vizir de la distribution de secours pécuniaires aux nécessitoux d'Anatolie. Son Altesse m'a répondu qu'il ne s'agissait nullement de remettre à la Commission Centrale de Secours ni à ses succursales dans les provinces la somme recueillie, mais de la distribuer, comme il a été fait jusqu'ici, en présence seulement d'un des membres de la Commission locale.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) TEWFIK.

No. 6.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 242.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 30*, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Colonel Chermside, Military Attaché to this Embassy, reporting the disbanding of Redifs, and commenting on the projected expeditions against Kurds and Albanians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Colonel Chermside to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Constantinople, March 28*, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency the following Military Report:—

Orders have recently been issued in compliance with Iradés—

1. To disband as many Redifs as possible, retaining where necessary battalions with effectives reduced by one half.

2. To dismiss the Ihtiats called out in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Ordus.

3. To dismiss to the Ihtiat or active reserve of the battalions, &c., all men who commenced service in 1891, retaining the four classes 1892–95 (1308 A.H.)

4. To dismiss the class 1892 (1309 A.H.) when the conscripts now taken by ballot are called up.

As regards the Redifs—

In the 1st Ordu only the 1st battalion 6th Regiment Kianghri battalion remains under arms with reduced effective.

In the 2nd Ordu no Redifs remain under arms.

In the 3rd Ordu all the Redifs under arms in Macedonia, &c., have been disbanded. (12.)

The three battalions, Avret Hissar 3rd battalion 42nd Regiment, Geoghelu 2nd battalion 42nd Regiment, Salonika 1st battalion 42nd Regiment, sent to Syria in December have returned and been disbanded.

Of the battalions of 3rd Ordu called out for service in Crete, *i.e.*, six of the 47th and 48th Regiments, the 4th battalion 48th Regiment Chinek battalion was not embarked, but was assembled ready at Milas. It has been disbanded. According to Her Majesty's Consul five other battalions were landed in Crete. 1st Rethymo 24th December, and 2nd at Suda Bay 29th December; 1st Khania between the

30th December, 1895, and the 10th January, 1896; half-battalion from Smyrna on the 8th February, 1896, remainder due in Hodeida later.

These five (or according to other accounts four) Redif battalions remain apparently at present under arms in Crete.

The 45th and 46th Regiments of Redifs, 3rd Ordu, were sent to Adana, Sis, and possibly Zeitoun. As we have received no news of their withdrawal or return to Smyrna. I presume that they are still under arms in 5th Ordu district.

Twelve or thirteen battalions of this Ordu therefore remain under arms.

4th Ordu. In this Ordu sixty-one battalions were called out.

Thirteen of those of the Trebizond, Rizeh, Gyumush, Khaneh, Samsoun, Sivas districts have been dismissed.

The 52nd Regiment, Kharput, &c., has been dismissed.

Part or all of the 59th and 60th Regiments, Van, Mush, Bitlis, Melasgird have been dismissed.

Part or all of the 50th and 51st Regiments have been dismissed.

Part or all of the 57th and 58th Regiments have been dismissed.

In all not less than forty battalions have been already dismissed, and very possibly more.

A certain number are to be dismissed almost immediately, and a few are likely to be retained under arms with reduced effective (400).

5th Ordu. Sixty-one battalions were called out, these have been mostly disbanded, and the rest are to be disbanded as soon as possible.

At first there remained under arms half-a-battalion at Jerusalem, a few battalions in Hauran, one at Beyrout, one at Lattakieh, and those at Marash and Zeitoun, and half-a-battalion at Urfa 4th battalion 68th Regiment.

At present of those in Syria, including battalions of 65th (Duma), 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd and 80th Regiments, all except 1st battalion 74th Regiment Lattakieh, and half 1st battalion 69th Regiment Beyrout, have been disbanded.

The disbanding of the remainder is ordered, but we have no news of those from Zeitoun, Marash, and Urfa having been withdrawn.

The troops, Redifs and Nizams, in the Hauran and Zeitoun expeditions suffered very severely from sickness, brought on by the season of the year, insufficient clothing, exposure, indifferent food, and want of sanitary precautions, and proper sanitary and other auxiliary services. The losses in the Hauran expedition have been stated as high as 5,000, those in the Zeitoun expedition as high as 3,000.

The former proportion, considering that the total troops engaged were under 30,000, is enormous—and though I have seen the word "lives"—the number probably includes sick.

Her Majesty's Consul, in his despatch of the 24th February last, gives the Druse losses as 310 killed throughout, those of the troops 700 killed and wounded, 4,000 from sickness.

We have received no details as to losses at Zeitoun. The troops are said to have lost heavily in action and in an unsuccessful assault, in repelling which the Zeitounlis are said to have used dynamite mines.

The Ihtiats in the 3rd 4th and 5th Ordus have been, or are being dismissed; 2,430 of the former reached Smyrna about the 18th March.

The class of 1891 were in some cases dismissed from the Nizam to the Ihtiat last autumn and winter, such as those of the Ordnance troops, 1st, 4th, and 5th Ordus, Tripoli, and the marines. In the case of the 2nd Ordu they were passed to the Ihtiat and dismissed some months ago.

In the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Ordus this is only now being carried out. As of late years special care is being taken to mitigate the hardships of these men on their long land journeys home by instructions to the local authorities. In few, if any, cases do they receive their pay in full, but they receive the balance in certificates, which the local treasuries accept at their inscribed value as payment of taxes.

Mushir Shakir Pasha, Imperial High Commissioner in Anatolia, has recommended the sending in the spring and summer of strong military expeditions against the Dersim and Hekkiari Kurds.

The former have never been completely subjugated, and owing to many of them being Kizilbashas, a non-Orthodox sect, hardly counted as Moslems, the Turks are always anxious if opportunity occurs to deal summarily with them.

As long ago as Hafiz Pasha's great campaigns against the Kurds in 1833–34 they escaped subjugation.

In 1853–54 Osman Pasha's expedition with 18,000 men was repulsed.

In 1879 Fazli Pasha's command echelonned along the west, south, and south-east of the Dersim, numbered forty-eight battalions, but no decisive result was obtained.

In 1882 a military column penetrated and numerous garrisons were established and are maintained, but the Kizilbashas of the feudal Chief Hussein Pasha still retain practical independence.

The Armenians in their own districts they regard somewhat as serfs, and do not seriously maltreat, but outside their own district they have been robbing and murdering Christian and Moslem alike, and have been raiding the villages towards Chimisgesck and Palu. The Hekkiari Kurds are also Kurds the chastising of whom appeals to the Turkish authorities rather on the ground of their chronic defiance of the authorities, than as oppressors of the Armenians, or authors of recent massacres. The majority of Christians in Hekkiari are Nestorian.

The Council of Ministers early in March drew up a Mazbata to the Sultan recommending the above expeditions, and also one against some of the Albanian Beys.

For some time past (1894–95) news has reached the capital of a wish of the Beys to revive the "League" and of renewed aspirations towards autonomy, of procural of rifles, and intrigues with foreign agents.

A Turkish official in speaking of above to me, mentioned that it was not considered in either case a serious danger: "We can always buy some of the Kurdish Beys, like the Albanian, and prevent a serious combination."

Dervish Pasha, in his successful pacification in 1884–85, is said to have largely employed bribery.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 7.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 243.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 174 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul acting at Erzeroum, inclosing an account by Mr. Hallward of his journey from Van to Diarbekir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 17, 1896

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to send your Excellency copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir reporting on the position of affairs in the localities through which he passed on his journey from Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Cumberbatch.

Diarbekir, February 25, 1896.

Sir,

I ARRIVED here from Van on the 18th instant. I found the Armenians of Arjish (Van) in a state of extreme anxiety as to the future. They mentioned more especially two dangers, viz., the possible return of the Kurds Hussein and Emin Pashas, who were at Erzeroum, and the possibility of disturbance at Van. In either case they apprehended further serious movements of the Kurds against themselves. I would

venture to express the hope that the return of the Pashas may be prevented in some way.

Both at Adoljevas (Van) and at Akhlat (Bitlis) the Turks, whose guest I was, inquired what was going to be done for the restoration of the property stolen by the Kurds from the Armenians, as they said that nothing serious had yet been done in that direction. They were interested to a certain extent in the question, as they had themselves had cattle stolen from Armenian villages.

At Bitlis Mr. Knapp, the American missionary, had been served with a summons to appear to answer a charge of breaking the peace. It seems that an attempt was being made to throw the responsibility for the massacre of the 25th October on him, on the ground that he had stirred up the Armenians against the Turks, who had thereby been moved to reprisals. The circumstances of the massacre suffice to prove the absurdity of this charge, the Armenians having been suddenly attacked and killed in their shops, though they had been solemnly assured the previous day by the Vali of the protection of the Government. There are now fifty-eight Armenians in prison, and thirty-eight others wanted by Government in connection with the massacre. I was told that one thing required of them was to sign a statement against Mr. Knapp. Among the prisoners is one of the principal Protestants of Bitlis, Avedis Gagosian, who has always borne a good character, and never taken part in any political affair.

The Vali of Bitlis appears to be a weak man, entirely under the influence of some of the fanatical Moslem Notables, who were themselves the instigators of the massacre. Saadedin Pasha, the Imperial Commissioner, whom I met near Arjish, on the road to Van, spent some three weeks in Bitlis, but does not appear to have done much beyond effecting a reconciliation between the Sheikh of Khizan, who was responsible for the massacre and plunder of many Armenians in that caza, and Sheikh Emin, of Bitlis, who was one of the authors of the massacre in that town.

At Farkin (Diarbekir) the centre of the Silouan Caza, where the Christian villages suffered terribly from every kind of outrage on the part of the Kurds in November last, the Armenians were also extremely apprehensive as to their future fate. A certain Hajji Reshid Agha, a very influential Kurd of the place, who took the principal part in organizing the Kurd raids in that district, and was also implicated in the massacre of Diarbekir, is still living unmolested at Farkin, and keeps the Christians in a perpetual state of terror. On the road from Farkin here I passed six Christian villages which had been completely burned, and are now absolutely deserted. The bazaars of this town were also entirely burned in the late disturbances, and nothing remains but the ruins of the walls of the shops.

Here, though there has been a succession of panics up to the present date among the Christians since the massacre and pillage in the town of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd November, order is maintained, chiefly owing to the presence of Abdullah Pasha, the Imperial Commissioner, and Zia Pasha, Commander of the troops, who have both shown some energy in keeping the Moslem population of the town quiet. No confidence appears to be felt in the Vali, and the departure of Abdullah Pasha might give rise to fresh disturbances.

The Government, on the whole, appear to wish to maintain tranquillity, but I could not hear of any serious steps being taken between Van and here for the punishment of those responsible for the massacres and pillage which have taken place or for the restitution of stolen property, and unless something is done in this direction it is difficult to see how the Government are to hold the elements of disorder in check.

I have not yet been able to obtain sufficient information to report fully on the situation here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 8.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 249.)
My Lord, *Pera, March 31, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 79 of the 29th January last, your Lordship is already aware from my telegrams of the principal points elucidated by the inquiry held by Mr. Fitzmaurice, in conjunction with Turkish officials, into the forced

conversions which have taken place at Biredjik and Ourfa. His investigations established the fact that there are absolutely no Christians left at the former town. About 150 persons were killed, and the remainder (about 1,500) turned Mahommedan in order to save their lives. At Ourfa the loss of life was far greater, as Mr. Fitzmaurice estimated that about 9,000 were killed, whereas only 400 changed their religion. He had little doubt that a deliberate plan had been formed and executed for the extermination of the Christian element by massacre or conversion. He found the whole district animated by an intense religious fanaticism, and the external observances of Islam were practised with unusual asceticism and fervour.

It is part of the religious law of Islam that any person who apostatizes from that faith must be punished by death, and Mr. Fitzmaurice pointed out that this penalty would certainly be inflicted on any Armenian who should venture to revert to his original religion. In fact, the converts only admitted in secret their desire to return to Christianity, and officially declared that they wished to remain Mussulmans. The Government has not as yet, however, recognized their conversion. Mr. Fitzmaurice was of opinion that it would be impossible for these Armenians to profess Christianity for some time to come, and thought it would be necessary to send a Commission, composed of high military and civil functionaries, to restore confidence by punishing the authors of the massacres. He was anxious that no action should be taken before he had time to come to Constantinople and report to me personally. I communicated Mr. Fitzmaurice's telegrams to the Russian Ambassador, who expressed agreement with his views that the danger for the converts returning to Christianity at present was too great to be risked. His Excellency said that he was reporting fully to his Government on the matter, and promised to urge the Porte to reserve to the converts the right of reverting to Christianity as soon as things should have settled down. My other colleagues also promised to speak in the same sense.

About the same time I received a telegram from Mr. Hampson, announcing that the disaster which was apprehended at Biredjik had actually occurred in Guendj. A number of Armenian families of that district had been forcibly converted to Mahommedanism during the massacres, but on the receipt of orders from Constantinople that they were free to adopt what religion they pleased, reverted to Christianity. On this they were attacked by the Kurds of Tchabakchur and twelve persons killed.

Mr. Hampson also stated that no Christians remained in the district of Saird. About 15,000 had been killed there, 19,000 converted to Mahommedanism, and 2,500 women carried off.

On the 7th March I addressed a written message to the Sultan through His Majesty's First Secretary, in the following terms:—

"Mr. Fitzmaurice has been ordered to come to Constantinople to report as to the conversions. It is most desirable that until his views and explanations have been heard, no decision shall be taken in the matter; that the conversions shall not be sanctioned, and the right of reconversion shall be fully reserved.

"It is obvious that the fact that the whole population, without one exception, was converted on the very day of the massacre, proves that the motive of conversion was fear of death. That the same fear prevents the converts from declaring publicly their wish to return to Christianity, but that if the Ottoman Government is sincere in its profession, that forcible changes of religion will not be allowed, it must give time for the passions now excited to cool, and must, when the proper moment comes, take every precaution for protecting the people against any violence on account of their return to the faith which they have only abandoned under terms of death. What is said here in regard to the special case of Biredjik, applies equally to the other places where conversions have taken place.

"Without sufficient precautions it is not safe at the present moment for the converts publicly to renounce Islam, nor should they be invited to do so until proper arrangements have been made for their safety; otherwise there will be repetitions of the massacre which was recently reported from Tchabakchur, and which I mentioned to the Sultan at my last audience."

In reply to this message, His Majesty said that it was impossible to take any decision at present, but that he was, as he had told me personally, averse to all forced conversions, and that no conversions would be sanctioned which had taken place under pressure of any kind.

After the receipt of this message I continued to receive telegrams, particularly respecting the Vilayets of Diarbekir and Kharput, which showed that the practice of the authorities was not at all in harmony with His Majesty's declarations. A new feature was presented by the case of Christian women abducted by the Kurds and

recovered by the Turkish authorities. They were in most cases not delivered to their relations or the priests of their faith, but kept in Turkish houses and terrorized into becoming Mussulmans. A peculiarly flagrant instance was communicated to me by the French Embassy.

An Armenian Catholic girl of 9 years old was brought before Ennis Pasha, the Governor of Diarbekir, and in spite of the protests of the Catholic Bishop and the French Consul, was recognized as a Moslem. Ennis Pasha stated that if he recognized her as a Christian he might cause disorders such as occurred at Salonica in 1875 when the French and German Consuls were killed. I brought these circumstances to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and of the Sultan's First Secretary, and suggested that it would be well to change the Vali of Diarbekir. I have not, however, as yet had any answer to these representations.

As soon as Mr. Fitzmaurice arrives and I have received his detailed reports, I propose to enter into a formal discussion of the question of conversions with the Imperial Government.

I shall endeavour to obtain the co-operation of the Russian Ambassador in arriving at an arrangement by which further conversions to Islam may be arrested and the return to Christianity of those already converted may be effected with safety.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 9.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 252. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 1, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Jeddah, reporting that he has abstained from the usual official acts of courtesy at Bairam, in concert with his French and Russian colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Jeddah, March 16, 1896.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 14th instant and my telegram of to-day, I have the honour to state that Bairam commenced here to-day. The Vali not having made the required visit of excuse, I and the French Consul and the Acting Russian Consul, acting in concert, abstained from the official acts of courtesy usual on this occasion.

The French Consul's instructions, which arrived about the same time as your Excellency's telegram, directed him to abstain from the usual visits and any sort of manifestation of courtesy. The hoisting of the Consular flag was, in his opinion, undoubtedly an act of courtesy from which he would, by his instructions, be bound to abstain. As your Excellency's telegram referred to visits only, and my Russian colleague has not yet received his instructions, I thought it well, while there was still time, to ascertain whether your Excellency would object to such a step, and I trust that my telegram of the 14th instant, which was despatched during an attack of fever, made this clear. I regarded your Excellency's reply of the 15th instant as leaving me free on this point as long as the three Consulates acted in concert.

Although Mr. Consul Richards and, I believe, some of his predecessors frequently made personal visits to the local officials at Bairam, it is the prevailing custom here for the Consuls to abide strictly by the ceremonial rules in force, and either to send a visiting card to the Kaimakam or to be represented by a Dragoman. It may, however, be said that the custom is to send a visiting card only, which is the practice followed by my French and Russian colleagues. The omission of a card or the failure to send a native Dragoman would, however, have had but little effect, and would hardly have

excited remark, whereas the absence of the flags on the three Consulates was sure to be noticed.

My Russian colleague only received his instructions yesterday afternoon, and was, unfortunately, unable to decypher a portion of the telegram, which was then too late to have repeated. He, however, understood that he was to abstain from visits of courtesy, and this he was prepared to do, but he was not inclined at first to abstain from hoisting his flag on this occasion as usual. My French colleague, on the other hand, insisted that his instructions did not in any case permit him to display his flag, and he contended that the omission of a visiting card would not have the effect which he presumed was intended. On this latter point I quite agreed with him, and I thought that there would be some contradiction in omitting to send a card while hoisting our flags, but I maintained that for two of us to act independently of the other would hardly be in accordance with our instructions, and that it was absolutely necessary to be unanimous. The Acting Russian Consul then gave way, and it was decided not to send visiting cards or any Dragoman to the officials, and to abstain from hoisting the Consular flags. As the steps taken by us would probably be explained by the Vali and his clique, who are ill-disposed towards the Kaimakam, as due to a personal misunderstanding with the latter (with whom our relations have always been excellent), or, Bairam being essentially a religious festival, might be easily perverted into a slight on the religion of the country, which might have serious results, we thought it advisable to inform the Kaimakam, unofficially, of our reasons, which was done during last night by M. Querry of the French Consulate. This morning the agreement was carried out.

The Kaimakan begged M. Querry, at about 11 o'clock this morning, to come and see him, and, with the permission of the French Consul, he went and was shewn by the Kaimakam a telegram from the Vali (replying to one which he had sent, informing him of the incident) to the effect that there was no necessity for him to come here, that visits on the part of the Consuls were not obligatory, but that if any called the Kaimakan was to return the visit at once.

I have reason to believe that the step taken has had a good effect here, and that it has much surprised and annoyed the local authorities, who seem to have regarded the incident of the attack on the Consuls of last May as practically closed so far as the Hedjaz is concerned.

I trust that the action taken in this matter will meet with your Excellency's approval. There was but little time for consultation when we had all received our instructions, and we wished as far as possible to act entirely in concert.

It is stated that the Vali intends to come here after Bairam is over, and I am about to telegraph to your Excellency for instructions as to whether the ordinary exchange of visits is to take place, in which case I should call first on his Excellency, or whether the visit of excuse must first be made. It is certain that the Vali will, if possible, make his excuses under cover of returning our visits in order to save appearances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

No. 10.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 253.) *Constantinople, April 1, 1890.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 190 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the termination of the campaign in the Hauran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

Damascus, March 19, 1890.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Acting Mushir Omar Pasha has returned from the Hauran, and that he reports that tranquillity is completely restored. His Excellency informed me that the Druses who had retired to Safa have retired to their villages on the condition that they should not be molested. I understand, however, that another consideration was chiefly instrumental in bringing about this result, namely that the Bedouins of Safa let the Druses know that if they were attacked by the Imperial troops they would not make common cause with them.

There are now six battalions of Regulars and two of Redifs in the Hauran, while three other Redif battalions are still stationed in the Mount Hermon district.

The failure of the Druses to make head against the Ottoman troops and their comparatively tame surrender may be ascribed to divided counsels and the want of leaders. Sheikh Shibly is principally responsible for the result, which is sufficiently disastrous to his sect, for he was a traitor to his co-religionists and to the Government. Had he declared openly for the Government there would probably have been no fighting, and had he declared for resistance the troops would have found the Hauran a far harder nut to crack.

As it is, the Druses have lost their cherished independence and all the privileges granted to them *ab antiquo* on condition that they defended the vilayet against the inroads of the Bedouins; but they have only themselves to thank for this calamity, as they had rendered themselves intolerable both to their neighbours and to the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 11.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 255.) *Pera, March 30, 1890.*
My Lord,

IT has for some time been apparent that the authorities of Bitlis were peculiarly unfriendly to the American missionaries established in that town. Complaints were brought against one of them named Mr. Knapp, and an attempt made to try him in a Turkish Court without the presence of a Consul. An investigation of the matter apparently satisfied the American Legation and the Bible House at Stamboul that it would be best to arrange the matter by withdrawing Mr. Knapp, and it was agreed with the Porte that he should leave Bitlis when the weather and roads improved.

On the 27th ultimo I received telegrams both from Mr. Hampson and from Mr. Cole (an American missionary at Bitlis) stating that the local authorities, in virtue of an Imperial Iradé, required the latter gentleman and all other missionaries to leave Asia Minor at once viâ Alexandretta.

The American Chargé d'Affaires, having received similar information, at once protested to the Porte, and I supported his representations, for, though all the persons threatened with expulsion were Americans, they were engaged in the distribution of the relief fund subscribed in England, and their presence was absolutely necessary for such distribution. My negotiations in this matter illustrate the singular conditions under which Government is carried on in this country. The Foreign Minister admitted that the Porte had received an Imperial Iradé ordering all American missionaries to leave Asia Minor. When, however, I made representations at the Palace both the First Secretary and Izzet Bey, the Sultan's Confidential Adviser, expressed much surprise, and denied that His Majesty had issued any such order. I strongly urged, both at the Palace and the Porte, the impolicy of the action contemplated by the authorities of Bitlis. The expulsion of American missionaries concerned not only the United States, but would inevitably create much indignation in England, and produce the impression that His Majesty refused to allow the money subscribed there to be used for saving his Christian subjects from starvation.

On the 30th March Nouri Bey, Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, paid me a visit on behalf of his Minister, and explained that the terms of the Imperial Iradé did not specifically refer to the missionaries, but merely to persons implicated in seditious movements. The same day I received a letter from Tewfik Pasha, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith, stating that the missionaries will not be in any way molested. I communicated this document to the United States' Chargé d'Affaires, and inclose a copy of his reply. Your Lordship will observe that the Foreign Minister informed him that the obnoxious Iradé had been repealed, whereas, according to the Palace, it never existed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 11.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir P. Currie.

Constantinople, le 30 Mars, 1896.

Mon cher Ambassadeur,

POUR faire suite à la communication que mon Secrétaire-Général est allé vous faire de vive voix, je viens vous informer que les missionnaires se trouvant en province ne seront nullement molestés tant que par leur attitude ils ne se mettront pas en contravention avec les lois en vigueur dans l'Empire; et qu'ils pourront continuer à vaquer à leurs affaires comme par le passé.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) TEWFIK.

Inclosure 2 in No. 11.

Mr. Riddle to Sir P. Currie.

United States' Legation, Constantinople, March 31, 1896.

Dear Sir Philip,

THE Foreign Minister informs me that the obnoxious Iradé having been repealed, there is now no occasion to consider it any longer, and he is in consequence unable to furnish me with the promised copy.

We are all very grateful for your assistance in this matter, which has had the effect of so promptly nipping in the bud this outrageous attempt of the Turkish Government.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) J. W. RIDDLE.

No. 12.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 6.)

(No. 257.)

Constantinople, April 2, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas.

I have drawn the attention of the Sultan's First Secretary to the irregularities mentioned by Major Bulman and to the desirability of retaining Mustafa Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

Sivas, March 12, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that during the past week there has been again a widespread expectation that after Bairam there would be a recurrence of disorder. I have received letters from different parts of the province informing me that the

Turks of those districts had sent letters to Kurds and Circassians, inviting them to meet, and after Bairam, join in pillaging and massacring the Armenians. I communicated these letters to the Governor-General, and mentioned such places as seemed to require special precautions. The Governor-General acted with the greatest energy, and I have every reason to believe that any attempt at disorder will be at once suppressed on this occasion, but there is no guarantee against a recurrence of similar outbreaks, and as it is beyond dispute that the majority of the people desire them, and fully expect to receive orders to continue the massacres and pillages of last autumn, it is most improbable that some opportunity of doing so will not be found.

Rumours have lately been current of a quarrel between Kurds in the neighbourhood of Mount Aghri, in the province of Kharput, and close to the border of the Sivas Province. It appears that one of the Kizilbash Kurds of that district proclaimed himself a Prophet, but that some of the Suni Kurds disapproved of this, and attacked the tribe to which he belonged. During the engagement that took place about fifty were killed, and among them the Prophet. So far I have been unable to get any particulars, but I believe these details are substantially correct.

Last week an Armenian was murdered and robbed on a road near a village, Negarn, about nine hours from Sivas. The murderers have been arrested and brought to Sivas, and, the Governor-General informed me, would probably be hanged. An Armenian shop was looted in the town last week, but the Turk who did it has been imprisoned, and the matter has no importance.

Twenty mounted zaptiehs were sent from here to Tokat this week to reinforce the garrison there, owing to a street brawl that took place. It appears that an Armenian attempted to collect money for the Committee, but was seized by his own people and given up to the Government authorities, but that some Turks took the opportunity to try and create disorder, which was at once suppressed. The state of Tokat is not satisfactory, and may cause anxiety. The fact of its being a rich town that has hitherto escaped all pillage, has aroused the cupidity of many. The energy of the Ferik Pasha "Mustapha" Pasha, who has protected it, has aroused the jealousy of the less zealous officials of other towns where pillage has occurred. In addition to this, the Governor-General has more than once informed me that some notorious Armenian is hidden there whom the Government wishes to arrest, and that unless he is given up, some trouble may occur. Under these circumstances it is to be desired that the Ferik Pasha should be retained there, and some reward, in recognition of his services, bestowed on him. As regards the general state of the province, it may be described as one of lawlessness tempered by discretion. In some parts the Government seems powerless. To the south-west of the town, at about twelve hours' distance, Mikrali Bey, the Colonel of the Hamidieh Cavalry, looted all the villages in his neighbourhood during the disorders of last autumn, and can apparently do much as he likes with complete impunity. As an instance of this, I am informed that last year the Government sent an officer and two zaptiehs to arrest a man in his district. They did so, but on their return journey they were met by Mikrali Bey and some of his men, who released the prisoner and sent the escort away. The Hamidieh Cavalry are still wearing in their caps the badge which constitutes their uniform. I drew the attention of the Governor-General to this as being contrary to the recent reforms, and he promised to give the matter his attention.

Typhus is prevalent. One of the French Sisters of Charity died from it yesterday, and I am informed that last night three persons died from it in one house.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 13.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 6.)

(No. 261. Secret.)

Constantinople, April 2, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of the decypher of two telegrams which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting disorders in that district.

I am bringing the matter to the notice of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 13.

Vice-Consul Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Van, April* 1, 1896.

KURDS attacked three villages about three or four hours from here on the 30th March. Twenty-six reported killed, some wounded. Police sent. Situation of villages serious. Town apparently in no danger. Recommend support of Vali.

Inclosure 2 in No. 13.

Vice-Consul Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Van, April* 1, 1896.

ANOTHER village reported attacked same district. No details. Saadeddin Pasha has left with battalion and squadron of cavalry. Assures me that he means business. Villagers sent back for burial of dead under escort. Town quiet.

No. 14.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 263.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 2, 1896.

THE Porte notified to the Embassies on the 21st March that, according to information received from Aleppo, an outbreak had occurred at Kilis, a town in that vilayet. The official version stated that eight Armenians had been killed and ten Armenians and four Mussulmans wounded. Much property had been pillaged, but subsequently restored. On the same day, Mr. Catoni telegraphed much the same account, which he doubtless received from the local authorities.

On the 25th, however, he telegraphed again, saying that he had now received a letter from an impartial person resident at Kilis, who estimated that about 100 Armenians had been killed and wounded, and considered that the massacre had undoubtedly been arranged by the Mahommedans, since risings had occurred in the town and surrounding villages almost simultaneously. The pillage had been great, and the local authorities had made no effort to protect Christians. Mr. Catoni added that the Kaïmakam of Kilis arrived at Aleppo the day before the massacre. The Vali now admitted that twenty-two persons had been killed, and said he had authority from Constantinople to punish the culprits.

I brought these facts to the notice of the Sultan's First Secretary, who said, in reply, it could not be true that the Kaïmakam had left Kilis just before the disaster, as he had put himself in telegraphic communication with him as soon as the disorders began. He produced numerous telegrams addressed to this official and to the Vali of Aleppo, enjoining them to preserve order by every means in their power.

I have instructed Mr. Fitzmaurice, who, as your Lordship is aware, is travelling in those districts, to inquire into the matter as he passes through Kilis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 15.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received, April 6.)

(No. 123.)

(Telegraphic. P.) *Constantinople, April* 6, 1896, 2·40 P.M

MY telegram No. 120 of the 31st ultimo.

Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout telegraphs that Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" has relieved Her Majesty's ship "Hood" at Antioch Bay, and that the captain of the latter, which returned to Beyrout yesterday, reported to the Senior

Officer that the presence of 1,500 Turkish troops, who are surrounding the Armenian villages, is the real cause of the panic round Suedia.

The squadron will probably leave Beyrout on the 10th. An American man-of-war called at Suedia last week, but left immediately without communicating.

No. 16.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 90 A.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 6, 1896.

THE Reports recently forwarded to this Office by your Excellency respecting the condition of affairs in the eastern provinces of Asia Minor and in Syria show that, although in some instances the Turkish authorities have proved themselves capable and energetic, no comprehensive effort is being made to improve the administration, either by the general introduction of reforms, or by the due application of the existing laws. No measures have been taken to control the turbulence of the Kurdish tribes, and the reports received from Her Majesty's Consular officers show that both on this account and owing to the unallayed feelings of hostility towards the Christians entertained in many districts by the Mussulman population, there is grave reason to fear a renewal of the disorders of last year.

Mr. Vice-Consul Hampson reported from Mush on the 27th January that the Mutessarif had arrested some Mussulmans, who, either by open threats, or in the guise of friendly warnings, had been telling the Armenians that it was unsafe for them to go to the bazaar or open their shops, that a massacre was imminent, &c. The effect had been excellent, but it was to be feared that the moving spirits in these designs were to be found among the higher official and influential classes, who, for their own ends, had promulgated, and continued to promulgate, these threats, and that the arrest of some of their tools would have but little effect on the real sources of danger. Mr. Hampson paid a high tribute to the just and firm administration of the Mutessarif, but felt anxiety with regard to the military forces under the command of Rahmi Pasha, who was fanatical, incapable, and almost in his dotage. The soldiers might at any moment start a massacre, which it would be beyond the power of the Mutessarif to control. A pressing difficulty was the absolute bankruptcy of the Government, the pay of officials, soldiers, and police being many months in arrear, while the Central Government continually demanded money.

From other sandjaks in the Vilayets of Bitlis, Sairt, and Guendj, Mr. Hampson continued to hear bad accounts. Many Armenians dying of starvation, whole districts forcibly converted to Islamism, monasteries and churches in the possession of the Sheikhs and Mollahs, and general terrorism.

The same officer reported on the 5th February that the condition of affairs in Bitlis remained very unsettled. Constant attempts were being made to promote further disorders, arrests of Armenians continued, and the charges against them of having originated the outbreak of the 25th October were being vigorously prosecuted.

Mr. Vice-Consul Williams was able to report, on the 15th February, that the city and district of Van remained quiet. Some Armenians, however, had been killed in neighbouring villages. The feeling between the Kurds and Armenians was exceedingly bitter, and the Vice-Consul was afraid, unless steps were taken in the near future to obtain some hold over the Kurds, that the coming summer would see very grave events in the vilayet.

In a despatch, dated the 27th February, Mr. Acting Consul Catoni stated that the Christians at Aintab continued to be in a state of alarm from the fact that the local authorities were continually arresting Armenians on vague accusations of being connected with the last disturbances there, or with the insurrection at Zeitoun; while on the other hand, not a single Moslem had so far been imprisoned, encouragement being thus given to the latter to renew their attacks on the Christians. There seemed reason to fear that if stronger measures were not taken with a view to the immediate and exemplary punishment of all the culprits, without distinction of rank or religion, further disturbances would occur not only in Aintab, but also in Marash and Ourfa. The Armenian prisoners from Aintab in confinement at Aleppo were still kept in prison without trial notwithstanding the reiterated promises of the Vali that justice would soon be rendered to them.

From Erzeroum Mr. Consul Cumberbatch reported on the 25th February that obstacles were being placed by Zekki Pasha against any action being taken against the Kurds in general, and that he was the cause of the delay in the legal proceedings, urgently demanded by both Shakir Pasha and the Vali, against Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, Emin Pasha, and Tamir Pasha, the three notorious Kurdish Chiefs who are detained at Erzeroum to be tried for their participation in the excesses of last autumn. Mr. Cumberbatch thought that unless pressure was brought to bear on the Porte there was every chance of these men escaping punishment for their well-known misdeeds, and that their evasion of justice would not fail to encourage a recurrence of Kurdish raids.

Mr. Consul-General Drummond Hay informed your Excellency on the 1st March that fanaticism amongst the Mussulmans of Beyrout, which had for some months been dormant, had reawakened. Respectable Christians had been assaulted and fired at in the public thoroughfares of the town in broad daylight, and recently several inoffensive persons had been attacked at night and two of them killed. The authorities acted with promptitude, and made a considerable number of arrests. It was however of vital importance for the maintenance of the public peace that the trial and condemnation of the criminals should be properly carried out. Delay might lead to the families of the victims resorting to acts of revenge, and, moreover, would have a bad effect not only in Beyrout but throughout Syria.

On the 3rd March Consul Eyres reported from Damascus that the result of the expedition against the Druses and the recent course of events in connection with the Armenian provinces had created a feeling of exultation among the Mussulmans. They felt that the one great restraining force, which had always hung as a shadow over them, and had kept them in bounds in their dealings with Christians, namely, the fear of European intervention, had been removed; and it was to be apprehended that, under certain conditions, the consequences of this change of sentiment might prove disastrous.

After reporting some particulars relative to a police force raised and equipped at Sivas, in accordance with the scheme of reforms, Mr. Vice-Consul Bulman stated, on the 3rd March, that the officials sent to various parts of the province to collect and restore the property pillaged from the villages had kept for themselves, or sold, the bulk of the property recovered. Complaints addressed to the Governor-General had led to no result. There were rumours of a plot to create a fresh pillage and massacre in the town, the Vice-Consul having warned the Governor-General, several arrests were made, and tranquillity had not been disturbed.

Writing from Angora on the 10th March, Mr. Consul Richards confirmed previous Reports of a disturbance at Kirshehir. In spite of warnings that an attempt against the Armenians was in contemplation, the Mutessarif authorized the disbandment of the troops which garrisoned the town. Four days later the attack was made, in which four Armenians were killed and nine wounded, two of the latter mortally. It was only by the energetic action of the Mayor that order was re-established, and that the murderers were arrested in time to prevent the movement assuming very serious proportions.

Mr. Richards had also received information that the road between Kirshehir and Cæsarea was overrun by marauders, who were committing every kind of depredation without apparently running any risk whatever of interference on the part of the authorities.

Mr. Consul Richards stated, in a despatch dated the 11th March, that he had learnt from various reliable sources that the general state of things in Cæsarea was deplorable. Trade was at a standstill; there was everywhere evidence of the greatest privation and distress, not only in the town itself, but in the surrounding villages, where many of the inhabitants were on the verge of starvation. There was also a widespread belief that there would be a fresh outburst of fanatical rage against the Christians during the Bairam festival. One town, Gemerek, was mentioned as very likely to be the scene of violence and bloodshed. The Turks there had behaved well on a previous occasion in helping the Armenians to defend the town against a threatened attack from Circassians and Kurds. The authorities, however, had not regarded their conduct with a favourable eye, and they had since been subjected to a series of annoyances and vexations. They had, in consequence, changed their attitude, and the next time the Kurds and Circassians made one of their murderous forays they were not likely to meet with any opposition on the part of the Turks.

Your Excellency learnt from your Italian colleague that, on the 10th March, the cavass of the Italian Consul at Trebizond had been attacked and severely wounded by three Turks. Several arrests had been made, but no confidence was placed in the promises of the Governor. The Turks in the town were armed, and the danger was consequently continual.

The information obtained by Mr. Vice-Consul Hallward and telegraphed to your Excellency on the 11th March respecting the condition of the Province of Kharput was that general and increasing apprehension existed throughout the vilayet caused by threats of massacre during Bairam and by the inaction of the Government. Similar threats were being made at Diarbekir, and the Christians in Chinkoosh, Silouan, and Palou lived in daily terror of the local Kurds.

At Adana riots of a serious character took place in consequence of a rumour that during a drunken brawl two Armenians had insulted the Mahommedan religion. Armed Turks assembled in the streets beating and insulting every Christian whom they met without distinction. About thirty Christians were wounded in different parts of the town, and the two Armenians who were the cause of the riot died from the injuries which they received. Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Christmann attributed this outbreak of fanaticism to the presence of Turks who had arrived from places where massacres had occurred, and who reproached the people of Adana for having remained quiet, and also to the arrival of four Armenians from Zeitoun, whom the public considered to have been the chiefs of the insurrection, and therefore the direct cause of the death of so many Adana Redifs.

Letters from Kharput forwarded by Mr. Consul Cumberbatch show that the religious persecution of Armenians had not abated in the vilayet. The writer had received from all directions, especially from the distant villages, new proofs of the Mahommedan crusade, and mentioned that in the Arabkir villages of the Eghin Caza the persecution was unremitting.

At the beginning of last month a fresh outbreak of fanaticism was reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Hampson in the Chabakchur Caza of the Guendj Sandjak, resulting in the death of some twelve Armenians who had been forcibly converted to Islam, but who had again professed Christianity on the strength of orders received from Constantinople that such converts should be allowed to revert to their former faith.

Mr. Hampson also stated that no Christians remained in the district of Sairt. About 15,000 had been killed there, 19,000 converted to Mahommedanism, and 2,500 women carried off.

Mr. Fitzmaurice not having yet returned to Constantinople, your Excellency has not yet been able to forward to me his full report with regard to the forced conversions which have taken place at Biredjik and Ourfa. Telegrams received from him show, however, that he had ascertained that there were absolutely no Christians left at the former town. About 150 persons were killed, and the remainder (about 1,500) had turned Mahommedan in order to save their lives. At Ourfa the loss of life was far greater, as Mr. Fitzmaurice estimated that about 8,000 were killed, whereas only 400 changed their religion. He had little doubt that a deliberate plan had been formed and executed for the extermination of the Christian element by massacre or conversion. He found the whole district animated by an intense religious fanaticism, and the external observances of Islam were practised with unusual asceticism and fervour.

A telegram from the Acting Consul at Aleppo, forwarded by your Excellency on the 26th March, announced an outbreak at Killis. About 150 Armenians were killed or wounded, many houses and shops were plundered, and the local authorities made no efforts to protect the Christians. Mr. Catoni had learnt from an impartial source that the massacre had evidently been arranged by the Mahommedans, since the rising occurred almost simultaneously in the town and surrounding villages.

In another telegram, Mr. Catoni stated that reinforcements of troops had been sent to Suedia, the object, according to the Vali, being to search for and seize certain Armenian revolutionaries who were exciting the villages to rise against the Government. Great panic prevailed in the whole district of Antioch, a general outbreak being feared if the troops attacked the Armenian villages.

Meanwhile, as shown in the Memorandum by Mr. Block inclosed in your Excellency's despatch No. 226 of the 20th March, the constitution of the Commission of Control, appointed under the scheme of reforms, is far from satisfactory. The members appear to possess little, if any, authority or power of initiative, and no practical results have as yet come from their deliberations.

The situation cannot be regarded otherwise than with grave apprehension for the immediate future, and must already be operating to the serious disadvantage of the Administration. For even in the absence of active disturbances, the general condition of disquietude and unrest effectually stops all industry and commerce, and where

these are arrested the revenue necessarily disappears in consequence. It is a matter of sincere regret to Her Majesty's Government that the representations which you have made to the Porte on the subject have produced to all appearance so little effect. But both in the interest of the Sultan himself and in that of His Majesty's Christian subjects, it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to continue to bring the true state of affairs to the notice of the Turkish Government. You will therefore persevere in calling attention to the cases of oppression or misgovernment that are reported to you, and in pressing for remedial measures. If, notwithstanding your efforts, the events which there seems so much reason to fear should occur, and should be followed by results still more serious for the welfare and stability of the Ottoman Empire, no portion of the responsibility will rest with Her Majesty's Government, who have done their best by friendly advice and warning to avert these evils.

Your Excellency is authorized to mention the contents of this despatch to the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs or to show it to them if you think it desirable to do so, not as an official communication, but as a frank statement of the impressions that Her Majesty's Government have derived from the reports of their officers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 17.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 266.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 6, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 165 of the 1st March last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy (in paraphrase) of a telegram which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis respecting emigration of Armenians from that district.

Even if the consent of the Turkish Government could be obtained to such emigration, which seems doubtful, steps could hardly be taken for the purpose unless provision had first been made for the payment of the expenses of the removal of the emigrants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) F. *Bitlis, April 5, 1896.*

IN my opinion, more than half of the Armenians of this district would emigrate if the Government permitted them. They have no work; everything they possessed is lost, and they are utterly hopeless. Would it be possible, in view of these facts, to obtain for them permission to leave the country?

No. 18.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 124.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 10, 1896, 11 A.M.*

JEDDAH Indemnities: your Lordship's telegram No. 62 of the 6th instant.

My French and Russian colleagues and myself have been exerting constant pressure, but have not as yet been able to persuade the Porte to make any definite arrangement for the payment of the indemnities. The withdrawal of the man-of-war from Jeddah during the pilgrim season would, in my opinion, be undesirable.

No. 19.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 267.) *Pera, April 6, 1896.*
My Lord,

AFTER having made to Mr. Block the communication in regard to Egypt reported in my despatch No. 256 of the 1st instant, Izzet Bey proceeded to deliver to him, in the presence of the First Secretary, the following message for me from His Majesty in regard to the Armenian question:—

"The Sultan had done all in his power to satisfy the British Ambassador, but had observed with regret, at his last audience, that he appeared to be dissatisfied, and had expressed the opinion that there was still much to be done. As regarded the Armenians, His Majesty noticed that they were not contented. He heard that in the Caucasus and on the Persian side of the frontier in the neighbourhood of Van they were still plotting and organizing expeditions into Turkish territory. At Alexandretta and its neighbourhood Armenian Committees were conspiring with the object of causing further disorders and were sending their members secretly to Cyprus, whence they would return in sailing-vessels as revolutionary agents landing on unobserved parts of the coast of Cilicia. At Killis disorders had occurred in consequence of a Turk being shot by an Armenian. In another place an Armenian had invited a Moslem into his house, and had endeavoured to poison him. Under these circumstances, His Majesty desired that the Ambassador would give him his opinion as to what could be done to content his Armenian subjects."

Although after all that has passed I can have little hope that the Sultan has any intention of acting upon the advice of Her Majesty's Embassy, or that anything I can say will influence his conduct towards the Armenians, I thought it well to return a conciliatory answer to his message, and I accordingly instructed Mr. Block to read to the First Secretary the reply, of which a copy is inclosed, in which I recapitulated the measures which appear to be most urgently required to restore some degree of confidence to the Armenians.

Mr. Block accordingly delivered this message on the 3rd instant with an expression of my earnest hope that the suggestions I made would be received as a proof of the friendly spirit which animated Her Majesty's Government, and of their sincere wish for the restoration of peace and tranquillity in His Majesty's dominions.

I regret to say that the way in which the message was received by the confidential servants of the Sultan shows how little hope there is that His Majesty will take any steps to redress the wrongs suffered by the Armenians, or will even admit that they exist.

After reading a Turkish translation of my message, the First Secretary and Izzet Bey observed that the Armenians had throughout been to blame, that they had in no case been attacked unless they had first provoked the Turks, and that the latter had frequently been killed while at prayer in their mosques. They declared that a clear proof that the whole of the massacres had been prepared by the Armenians was supplied by the fact that they had arms of modern type, whereas the Turks had only antiquated weapons.

They considered that all necessary measures had been taken to prevent disorder and restore confidence, and that time must do the rest. Cattle and grain were being distributed, and it would not be right, in their opinion, to speak of protecting Armenians against Kurds, as in many cases the latter were not the aggressors. With regard to the punishment of those concerned in the last massacres, they said that many Mussulmans as well as Armenians had been arrested, and that it would be unfair to release the latter without the former. As to the reforms, they appealed to the registers kept at the Palace as showing that they were being executed, and that the Sultan was doing his utmost to carrying them out in their entirety.

Mr. Block had no difficulty in refuting these statements, and he insisted upon the communication of a full translation of my message to the Sultan.

He subsequently, by my instructions, called upon the Foreign Minister, and while leaving with him a translation of the message, explained that my object in sending it to the Sultan was to meet in a spirit of courtesy and friendliness any advances that might be made by His Majesty, and to show my earnest wish to assist His Majesty in restoring confidence to his Armenian subjects, and thus regaining, as far as possible, the friendship and sympathy of England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 19.

Reply of Sir P. Currie to the Message of His Majesty the Sultan.

THE Ambassador has received the message transmitted to him through Mr. Block, in which the Sultan has been good enough to ask his opinion as to what should be done to content his Armenian subjects.

In the Ambassador's opinion the mode of doing this is to give them a feeling of security for the future. What is past is past, the dead cannot be brought to life, and the Ambassador is quite ready to assist as far as he can in throwing a veil over the events of last year provided that measures are taken to ameliorate the condition of the survivors.

The Ambassador is grateful for the facilities that have been given for the distribution of relief collected in England. He has reason to hope that by these means the loss of life by starvation has been reduced. The spring is coming on, and the first thing is to take care that in the agricultural districts the people should be protected against the Kurds and allowed to attend to their agricultural labours unmolested, and should be assisted by the Government where cattle and grain are wanting.

Next comes the question of conversions. The Ambassador relies on the Sultan's promises, and as soon as the Vice-Consul whom he sent to Biredjik at His Majesty's suggestion returns, he will submit proposals to His Majesty as to the best means of enabling the converts to return to Christianity in safety.

The surviving Armenians cannot be expected to feel secure when those who took a leading part in the massacres are unpunished. The Ambassador would suggest that Commissioners should be appointed with powers to deal with the most flagrant cases.

While the Mussulmans remain wholly unpunished the gaols are full of Armenians, whose only crime was to defend their lives against attack.

Steps should be at once taken to release them. A general amnesty at Easter might be granted.

There remains the question of reforms. If they were promptly put into execution in practice, and not only in theory, they would no doubt have an excellent effect in convincing the Armenians that there was a genuine intention on the part of His Imperial Majesty to improve their condition.

Once confidence is restored by the means above suggested the agitation would cease, and the Armenians would again become a peaceful and contented element of the Ottoman Empire.

No. 20.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 270.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 6, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting the departure of the caravan of the Hadj.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Damascus, March 24, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that the caravan of the Hadj started officially on the usual date, the 5th Shawal, which fell on the 19th instant. The financial difficulty on which I have previously reported to your Excellency had not, however, been removed, and it was doubtful when the caravan would be able to proceed on its journey.

I have to-day received information that some arrangement has been made with the Ottoman Bank at Constantinople, which has telegraphed to its agencies at Beyrout and Damascus to pay to these vilayets a sum of 30,000*l.* respectively.

This money is no doubt intended for the expenses of the Hadj, which will thus be enabled to start in about fifteen days, as the money has to be sent from Constantinople, the Bank's agencies not having sufficient funds.

The ceremony of the departure of the caravan was considerably less imposing this year than heretofore, being shorn of its former glories, and there was little or no enthusiasm among the spectators.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 21.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 271.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 6, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van reporting on the state of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 21.

Vice-Consul Williams to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Van, March 11, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the state of this town has been far from satisfactory during the last few days, and while I do not apprehend anything in the way of a rising against the Christians, there is no doubt that the situation may at any moment become serious. The soldiers are exasperated at the death of their comrade, and revenge themselves by beating any Armenians they can catch in the streets. Badly disciplined and discontented as they are, it only requires some further action on the part of the revolutionaries for them to get entirely out of hand. The circumstances attending the death of the soldier are as follows:—

On Friday evening (6th March), soon after sunset, three soldiers on fatigue duty from the guard near my house were bringing the dinners from the main guard where they had been cooked. They met a party of Armenians armed with rifles and revolvers. They called on them to stop. They refused, and one of the soldiers ran forward and caught one of the party. One of his friends then fired and killed the soldier, and they all ran away. My information is from an Armenian, opposite whose house the affair took place.

I have previously called attention to the criminal folly of these revolutionists. Parties of them constantly patrol the streets at night in the Armenian quarters "covered" with guns and revolvers which few of them know how to use. The bulk of the Armenian population have no sympathy with these men, but they are too cowardly to do anything.

While I hope and believe that the present crisis here will be satisfactorily passed, I cannot conceal from your Excellency my anxiety for the future of this country, although we may drift along. It is difficult to see how any real improvement in the present deplorable state of the Christian population is to be obtained. Believing, as I do, that such men as the Vali here, seeing where their country is drifting, earnestly desire the good of all subjects of His Majesty the Sultan, whether Christian or Mahommedan, they are hampered by the weakness and poverty of the Government, and by the unreliability of the troops, on whom they must depend as a last resort.

Mahommedan feeling is so high that any Vali has to be exceedingly careful of their susceptibilities, and cannot always do what he would. The reforms do not touch the

question. The first reform necessary is that the employés and troops should be paid regularly.

I have just received news from the district of Shattakh to which I dispatched an European, who, with some Armenians, has been distributing relief. He informs me that the distress has been exaggerated, and as this is one of the worst districts in this vilayet, the news is satisfactory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 22.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 272.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 6, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 95 of the 2nd February, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that an announcement in the Turkish newspaper, the "Terdjuman-i-Hakikat," of the 3rd instant, states that an Imperial Iradé has been granted authorizing the Turkish Commission for the relief of the necessitous and the rebuilding of Mussulman places of worship in Anatolia, to fix certain centres (mosques in different parts of the capital) for the sale of tickets to be distributed to contributors. These tickets range in value from 5 piastres to 1 lira, and are of two categories, the one for general relief, the other for the repair of Mussulman places of worship. Every contributor of 10 liras or more will receive a medal and berat; all contributions are voluntary.

I have, &c
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 23.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 126.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 13, 1896, 11·40 A.M.*

MY telegram No. 123 of the 6th April. Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout telegraphs that the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille," which arrived there yesterday morning, reported all quiet so far at Suedia. The squadron has left Beyrout for Alexandretta.

No. 24.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 14.)

(No. 128.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 14, 1896, 6 P.M.*

MY telegram of yesterday, No. 126. Mr. Catoni telegraphs from Aleppo that he is informed by the Vali that the Armenian villagers round Suedia have surrendered about fifteen Huntchagists to the authorities without resistance, and that the disturbances may practically be considered at an end.

No. 25.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 129.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 15, 1896, 12·30 P.M.*

TO-DAY'S papers announce the appointment of a Turkish Kaïmakam of Zeitoun.

The Embassies are protesting against this appointment as being contrary to the Vizieral letter promulgating the reforms and the agreement entered into with the Zeitounlis.

No. 26.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 18.)

(No. 274.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 12, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting on the general state of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Cumberbatch.

Sir, *Diarbekir, March 17, 1896.*

THE losses suffered by the Christians in the disturbances of last November, though more or less general throughout this vilayet, were far more severe in the districts to the north of the Tigris than in those to the south. The area most affected extends roughly from Bisheri, on the Tigris, to the east, to Severek on the west, and to the north as far as Palou, and includes the districts of Diarbekir, Bahremki, Bisherri, Silouan, Hani, Lidga, Palou, Argana, Chinkoush (on the Euphrates), and Severek. To the south of the Tigris, Mardin was attacked by Kurds, but the Christian and Moslem inhabitants combined to defend the town, and the Kurds were repulsed. They succeeded, however, in burning two large villages, Golli and Telarmen, containing about 500 and 400 houses respectively, the inhabitants of which fled to Mardin, where they are now subsisting on charity. Seven other villages in that district were plundered. Between Nisibin and Jezué several villages were also plundered.

In Diarbekir itself about 1,100 Christians were killed by Moslems of the town aided by a few Kurds from outside. The bazaars were first plundered and then burned; many houses were broken into and plundered and the inmates killed; the majority of those killed were killed in their houses. The plunder and massacre continued three days absolutely unchecked by the authorities. The soldiers and zaptiehs, including some of the officers, took an active part in the proceedings. Some 1,500 men, women, and children took refuge at the French Consulate and were kept there for several days, in spite of a threat made by the officer sent to protect the Consulate that he could not answer for the Consul's safety if he insisted on keeping refugees in the Consulate. The humane conduct of M. Meyrier, the French Vice-Consul, is much appreciated by all classes of Christians. Had it not been for the orders he obtained from Constantinople, the massacre would undoubtedly have continued and many more lives been sacrificed.

The whole movement was suddenly suppressed by the Government on receipt of instructions from the Porte, sent on the demand of the French Ambassador, which seems to show that the authors of the disturbance were well under Government control. The general belief is that the whole thing was organized by Ennis Pasha, the Vali, in concert with some of the leading Moslems, among whom I may mention Jemil Pasha, a former Governor of Yemen, Arif Effendi, Taïaat Effendi, head of the Municipality,

and Bekir Effendi. The theory that it was simply an outburst of Moslem fanaticism against the Christians appears to be untenable, as there was no particular ill-feeling between the creeds here, and the Christians had done nothing to provoke the anger or fanaticism of the Moslems.

Probably about 800 or 900 Christians were killed in the villages of the Diarbekir district, and nearly all the Christian houses in the villages were plundered; out of 770 Christian houses in the villages about 500 were burned; 155 women and girls were carried off by Kurds. Of these a few, perhaps twenty, have been brought back; some who have been recovered have declared themselves Moslem through fear. Thus, a few days ago, five Christian women and girls, including a girl who had been abducted four months before by Kurds, were brought before the Vali, and in the presence of the ecclesiastical authorities declared themselves Moslem. The fact is, the Christians are thoroughly terrorized by the Moslems and feel that they have no security for their lives or property outside Diarbekir itself. Some weeks ago the wife of a Jacobite in the Silouan district who had been carried off by Kurds was restored to her husband by the Government, whereupon the Kurds killed both her husband and father-in-law.

The two districts which have suffered, and are still suffering, the most are those of Silouan and Palou, which have the largest Armenian population in this vilayet. Silouan contained some well-to-do villages, grain being abundant and of good quality. The Armenian population was estimated at about 20,000 souls. These may now be accounted for as follows:—

7,500 reduced to destitution.
7,000 forcibly made Moslem.
4,000 disappeared: killed, died of cold, &c., or escaped elsewhere.

Twenty-three villages, with an aggregate of 1,045 houses, were entirely burned. Farkin, the centre of the Caza, though robbed to some extent, was not plundered like the villages; this accounts for the remaining 1,500 of the population. Enormous quantities of grain, agricultural stock, &c., were plundered by the Kurds and many women and girls abducted as elsewhere. The whole business was carried out by the Kurds under the orders of Hadji Reshid Aga who has great influence in the neighbourhood, much of the stolen property is now in his hands and he still threatens the Christians. I was told that deaths from starvation had occurred. The Government have been giving irregular relief to 6,500 persons, but there are many others who do not receive relief, but who need it equally. Mr. Andrus, of Mardin, has lately sent two men there to distribute clothing and money; they were confronted at the outset with a demand for blackmail from some local officials, and unless they are protected it will be difficult for them to do much good. The most pressing need there is really the removal of Reshid Aga, as his presence is a standing menace to the Christians, and the Local Government stands in considerable awe of him.

In the Palou district six villages with an aggregate of 181 houses were completely burned and seven other villages more than half burned, while nearly every Armenian house in each village of the district appears to have been plundered. Of a total Armenian population of 14,800, 900 persons were killed and upwards of 3,000 made Moslem; 44 churches were destroyed and 16 priests were killed; 195 women and girls were abducted, of these 108 have been returned. To the number of dead many others must be added who died of fright and exposure, and besides the abductions of women and girls it is said that a large majority of the Christian females of the region between the ages of 12 and 40 were violated by Turks and Kurds. Thus in the village of Yenikeny, which had an Armenian population of 185 (of whom ten were killed), the people took refuge with a certain Shukri Bey who, with his servants, violated all the young women and girls.

At the village of Ouzun Ova, which is largely Protestant in that district, eight men were shot in cold blood for refusing to turn Moslem; thirty-two women and children then seeing what was in store for them drowned themselves in the Euphrates, and the rest of the villagers declared themselves Moslem. A Turkish "khoja" has been assigned to them with a salary which they have to pay. I continue to hear complaints of oppression on the part of the Boys of Palou against the people of this village.

The largest village of the Palou district was Hebab with 220 Armenian houses, of which 180 were burned, and seventy people killed. A certain Tafur Bey, son of Sherif Bey, of Palou, was sent in January to look after the remaining houses; he began by pulling down two and using the wood for fuel; he has extorted £T. 160 in money from the villagers as the price of his protection, and demands that the land of the village be

transferred to him. The people are afraid to ask for his removal as he would then set the Kurds on to them.

One of the most influential Boys of the district is Ibrahim of Sakrat, who was charged to obtain the restitution of the stolen property to the Christians. He went round the villages extorting money from those who had stolen property, and taking receipts from the Christians who have thus recovered nothing, while he has enriched himself to the extent of several hundred pounds. I now hear that he is trying to force the villagers of Kapon Achmay to make over their lands to him, and the villagers have fled to Kharpout.

One of the worst men in Palou is the Mufti, who was very active in the massacre and killed the principal Protestant, Manoog Aga, with his own hand.

The town of Chinkoush, which had about 700 Armenian houses, was badly plundered and about 150 Armenians killed, the rest saved themselves by declaring themselves Moslem.

At Severek, about 700 or 800 Christians, out of a total of 3,500, are said to have been killed, and about 1,000 have become Moslem, together with all the Christians scattered throughout the villages of that district, amounting to some 1,500 souls—in all about 2,500.

Similar scenes were enacted in the other districts mentioned above.

In all about 8,000 appear to have been killed in the vilayet, and about 25,000 turned Moslem. Upwards of 500 women and girls have been abducted, and an incalculable amount of property of every description looted and destroyed. I give these figures for what they are worth, and subject to correction, as though I have collected statistics of most of the districts, I cannot by any means vouch for their accuracy.

Up to a few days ago nothing whatever had been done to restore order or security, and the Christian population were still in fear of further outbreaks on the part of the Moslems. This fear appears to continue in the outlying districts; but the situation in Diarbekir has been considerably improved by the removal to Moosul of Arif Effendi, an influential Moslem, who took a leading part in the massacre, and who kept the Christians in a continual state of panic by his threats.

One of the principal elements of disorder here is the so-called "Young Turkey" party, which numbers several adherents in this town, among them some of the worst characters in the place. The Vali is also in league with them. It is difficult to take these individuals seriously, who combine patriotism with plunder, and who compare the present state of things in this country with that existing in France at the time of the revolution. Nevertheless, they have to be reckoned with as their power for mischief is considerable. Their idea is to foment disturbances in order to provoke European intervention and the downfall of the Sultan. The person I have mentioned above, viz., Arif Effendi, Jemil Pasha, Bekir Effendi, Telaat Effendi, and a young man named Nazif Bey, who passed fifteen months in prison some years ago for a peculiarly revolting crime, belong to this party. These men ought to be got rid of, but even more urgent is the necessity of dealing with some of the Kurdish Chiefs in the outlying districts, such as Ibrahim Bey, of Palou, and Hadji Reshid Aga, of Silouan, for as long as these men remain unmolested I see no prospect of improvement, or any chance of the thousands of Christians who have been forcibly made Moslem, returning to their original faith.

The removal of the Vali is also a most necessary measure. Abdullah Pasha was instructed some six weeks ago to remain here on the urgent representation of the French Vice-Consul, but he might at any time receive orders to proceed elsewhere, as his mission is not confined to this place, and I fear his departure would be the signal for a renewal of panic, if not of disorder. Considering the part he has played all through these disturbances, his dismissal might fairly have been expected before now.

Great distress exists throughout all the districts I have mentioned, and it is aggravated by the action of the Kurdish local magnates, especially in Palou and Chinkoush, in preventing the distribution of relief. If any funds are available I could dispose of a good deal in Diarbekir and the surrounding villages where the distress is also great.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 27.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 18.)

(No. 130.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 18, 1896, 2·30 P.M.*

MY despatch No. 294 of 16th.

Vice-Consul Hampson telegraphed yesterday from Bitlis that he had been informed the previous evening by the Vali that orders had been received from Constantinople to permit the distribution of relief in the presence of two members of the Turkish Commission.

Mr. Hampson was asked to fix the place and hour of distribution.

No. 28.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 19, 1896, 12·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding telegram, Mr. Hampson telegraphs from Bitlis that he received a visit from the Vali yesterday morning, and that his Excellency also inspected the relief work, which is now proceeding smoothly and rapidly.

No. 29.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 275.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 12, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 40 of the 16th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting that the present Papal Delegate in Syria will shortly be transferred to Egypt and will be succeeded by a French subject, Mgr. Duval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, April 1, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th January last, I have the honour to report that the present Papal Delegate in Syria, according to information derived from a reliable source, will shortly be transferred in that capacity to Egypt and will be succeeded here by Mgr. Duval, Prefect of the Dominican Mission in Mesopotamia, a French subject, whose residence in this country extends over a period of forty years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 30.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 276.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 13, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 233 of the 24th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing three despatches from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush respecting the situation in that district, and the imprisonment and torture of Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 30.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 2, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to send your Excellency copies of three despatches received yesterday from Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Moush on the state of affairs in that town and district.

In his despatch No. 14 Mr. Hampson reports a case of ill-treatment of an Armenian prisoner, and in No. 15 he states that arrests of Armenians on political charges are still being effected.

In reference to this point I beg leave to state that, on receipt of Mr. Hampson's despatch of the 2nd March, copy of which I forwarded on the 11th, I communicated the information about imprisonment of Armenians to Shakir Pasha, as he had frequently assured me that he was strongly opposed to such arrests on old charges. His Excellency immediately telegraphed to the Moush authorities, and the answer was to the effect that no Armenians had been arrested there in connection with past events, and that the four men arrested at Kizil Agadj were charged with robbery.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 30.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Sir, *Moush, February 18, 1896.*

THERE is evident here lately a marked return of confidence, with a domineering and exclusive spirit among the Mussulmans. They openly declare that all attempts at foreign interference in the affairs of this country have entirely failed; protest against any idea of appointing Christian officials; warn the Armenians to submit, and to abandon all hopes of any external assistance; and say that, after all, the presence of foreign Consuls, who are powerless, is a matter of indifference. In short, the same condition that existed before the Sasoun affair is rapidly returning, except that the Mussulmans are emboldened by impunity, and the Christians proportionately in despair. All foreign prestige, especially English, has lost much ground.

In this immediate district, I have hopes that the enlightened view and real desire for order and justice of the Mutessarif may produce some effect as far as his powers go, but elsewhere the outlook is not cheerful; and everywhere the poverty and distress, and the ill-feeling and distrust arising from recent events will make the task, even should it intend improvements, most difficult.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. S. HAMPSON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 30.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Moush, March 8, 1896.

Sir,

I REGRET to inform you that I have reliable information that at least one of the Armenians recently arrested, as reported in my despatch of the 2nd instant, has been brutally tortured and outraged in an indiscribable way in the prison here. The object was to induce him to sign a deposition accusing several of the chief Armenians of Moush of sedition. To this end, he has for some nights past been treated as indicated. The actual torturer and perpetrator of these horrors is Mehmed (or Meh) Tchaoush, a zaptieh of whom I made complaints in my despatch of the 8th October last. This man is a notorious brute, apart from endless cruelties in the prison, he, with Talib Effendi and Captain Reshid (since dismissed), was guilty of many horrible deeds in Semal previous to the Sasoun affair.

While acquitting the Mutessarif of all knowledge of this torturing, I regret that, though Mehmed's character is well known, and his cruelties have been brought to Fehan Pasha's notice from various quarters, he refused to listen to my representations on the subject, declaring the stories to be false.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—I am glad to learn that since my representations, the nightly torturing has ceased.

C. S. H.

Inclosure 4 in No. 30.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Moush, March 15, 1896.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that four more Armenians have been arrested here, charged with having belonged to an Armenian revolutionary Committee, and that the authorities are endeavouring to obtain evidence for similar charges against many of the leading Armenians of Moush, including my Dragoman and Vartan Vartabed.

There is no accusation of any fresh intrigues, or of such a Committee being now in existence. The matters now under investigation date from at least a year.

Such action is most regrettable, and can only serve to endanger the public tranquillity. In fact, there is already a marked revival of uneasiness and fermentation.

I am sorry to have to add that the Mutessarif is lending himself actively to this policy. I believe his idea to be that by so doing he may counteract the accusations against him of having too much protected the Armenians, and that he hopes that after having obtained evidence that such a Committee existed, he will be able to obtain an amnesty for the members, and so strengthen his own position. Such a course is, however, most dangerous, and the results may, in the present state of public feeling, be very disastrous. A small spark would set the place ablaze, and probably result in a terrible massacre.

I have expressed my views on the subject very clearly to the Mutessarif.

I had the honour to telegraph in the above sense to Her Majesty's Government yesterday.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. S. HAMPSON.

No. 31.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 277.)

My Lord,

Pera, April 12, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inclose translation of an article which has appeared in the official Gazette of Kharpout, calling on the Moslems and non-Moslem inhabitants to live on friendly terms in accordance with the Sultan's wishes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Extract from the "Tarik" of April 11, 1896.

(Translation.)

THE official Gazette of the Vilayet of Kharpout publishes the following:—

Thank God, order has been re-established in every part of the Empire, and all the various classes of subjects live together on the same terms of amity as during the last 600 years.

Those foolish persons who were led away by foreign incitement to act contrary to the wishes of His Imperial Majesty have now realized the true origin of the movement as well as their own folly, and the power of the Imperial Government to restore order and institute reforms. Consequently it is well understood that the Imperial Government will carry out and complete reforms with a view to insuring perfect equality and justice for all, and that all classes of subjects will continue to act in a loyal manner; and the whole world recognises that His Majesty's chief desire is that all his subjects, of whatever denomination, shall live in peace and prosperity.

It is right, therefore, now that the events are past, that all should live amicably together and seek to make good their past losses. None of those ill-wishers (whose folly is inconceivable) now remain, and those who refuse to view the Ottoman Government in their proper light are now the object of universal detestation. It is therefore to be hoped that all, both Moslem and non-Moslem will preserve amicable relations, in accordance with the benevolent designs of His Majesty, whose mercy and charity are recognised by the whole world, and it is most important that every individual should thus act.

No. 32.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 279.)

My Lord,

Pera, April 12, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the appointment is announced of Mavrogordato Effendi, as Assistant to the Inspector of Reforms in Anatolia; he replaces Fethy Boy, the circumstances of whose resignation were reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 987 of the 24th December, 1895.

Mavrocordato Effendi retains his position at the Council of State, and is promoted to the rank of "Mutessarif." It would appear that Mavrocordato Effendi has hitherto been an unknown and insignificant functionary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 33.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 280.)

Pera, April 14, 1896.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 90 of the 9th March, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, respecting the number of Armenians killed and converted to Islam in the district of Sairt.

I have since received a telegram from Mr. Hampson on the subject, in which he says that subsequent investigation has convinced him that the figures given in this despatch are greatly exaggerated. He now makes the following estimate:—

Killed in the district of Sairt	1,935
,, ,, whole Vilayet of Bitlis	3,500
Converted in the district of Sairt	17,080
,, ,, whole Vilayet of Bitlis	22,000

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Moush, March 5, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 5th February, I have the honour to report that I have now received a detailed list of the victims of recent events in certain districts of Sairt, which were not included in the figures given in my above-quoted despatch. This list has been most carefully prepared at my request, details being given for each village; and I am assured that it is reliable. I admit, however, that bad as I knew matters to have been in that region, the figures given have startled me.

The following is a summary of those figures:—

Sairt Sandjak.	Original Number of Christians.	Number Killed.	Forcible Conversions.	Women Carried off.	Churches.	
					Burnt.	Now Mosques.
Bisherik	11,338	5,372	5,271	675	5	13
Nakhiban	6,579	2,575	3,549	455	10	2
Zokh	13,749	5,990	7,552	1,107	15	9
Redvan	5,258	1,895	2,999	364	6	5
Total ..	36,924	14,932	19,371	2,601	36	29

I am still waiting details from Khizan, Khoït, Shervan, and some other districts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 34.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 285.)

Constantinople, April 14, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch from the Acting British Consul at Aleppo reporting on the disturbed state of Suedia and other districts of the vilayet. I suggested to the Foreign Minister that Mr. Fitzmaurice, who was then at Aleppo, might visit the places mentioned, and, if necessary, act as a mediator. Towfik Pasha, however, declined this suggestion, saying that there was no necessity for Mr. Fitzmaurice's presence. The local authorities, he added, had such strict instructions that no troubles were to be apprehended.

I have since received a telegram from Mr. Catoni saying that, according to the Vali of Aleppo, the difficulty at Suedia has been almost entirely removed by the surrender of fifteen revolutionaries who were delivered to the authorities by the Armenian villagers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Aleppo, March 19, 1896.

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 12th and 16th instant reporting the anxiety prevailing among the Armenians of Antioch, Suedia, Beylan, and Akebèz, I have now the honour to report to your Excellency that, according to further information received by me, it appears that the state of things in these districts is really anything but satisfactory. The following details have been communicated to me, and I have duly brought them to the knowledge of his Excellency the Vali, who promises to take the necessary action in the matter, viz.:—

(*a.*) *Antioch.*—The attitude of Moslems in that town seems to be daily growing more aggressive, to such an extent that they are openly and continually threatening the Christians that they will soon follow the example of their co-religionists of Aintab, Marash, Ourfa, Biredjik, and elsewhere, by massacring them all. The same anti-Christian feeling prevails at Akebèz and Chekmerzmen to an alarming degree.

(*b.*) *Suedia.*—100 cavalry soldiers, who are said to be the authors of the recent massacres in the towns referred to, have lately arrived at the Village of Kabakliyé, and have arrested several Armenians upon no specified charges. The Vali himself confessed to me that in fact the state of affairs in Suedia was unsatisfactory, and even that a skirmish had taken place there a few days ago between some Turkish soldiers and certain Armenian villagers, but without serious consequences.

(*c.*) *Beylan.*—The Armenian pastor of Alexandretta reports that quite recently the Turks at "Deré-Bakdjé," near Beylan, destroyed the garden and burnt the house of a certain Armenian named Kehribar Bedros. The gardens and vineyards belonging to Sahac Caplandjian, Sarkis Djizmedjian, Katcher Djizmedjian, Yapoudji Sarkis, Kechichian Megreditch, Tachdji Agop, Pacha Oglou Agop, and to the widow Mariam were also destroyed, but the local authorities refused to listen to the complaints of the sufferers.

As already stated in my despatch to your Excellency of the 27th February last, in my humble opinion, this deplorable situation cannot be changed unless a severe punishment be inflicted upon its principal authors, and the authorities show themselves determined to act with energy and impartiality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. CATONI.

No. 35.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 286.)

Constantinople, April 15, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul acting at Erzeroum, inclosing a Memorandum which he has prepared on the work of Shakir Pasha in his capacity of Imperial Commissioner for the Reforms in the six Armenian Provinces.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 35.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 31, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to send your Excellency a Memorandum containing information on the achievements, so far, of Shakir Pasha in his capacity of Imperial Commissioner for the Reforms in the six Armenian Provinces contemplated in the Schedule transmitted to me in your Excellency's despatch of the 24th October last.

During the six months that I have had charge of this Consulate I have kept myself informed of the progress of Shakir Pasha's labours, but there has been nothing special to report.

Now that he proposes to proceed on his tour to the other vilayets as soon as the state of the roads permits of his doing so, and, in view of my approaching departure, I have thought it would interest your Excellency to know what has been done up to the present. In order not to omit anything I sought an interview with the Imperial Commissioner last week, and the remarks volunteered by him on each point in turn are embodied in the accompanying Memorandum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 35.

Memorandum by Consul Cumberbatch on Remarks of Shakir Pasha on the Points of Reform contained in the Schedule annexed to the Vizirial Letter of October 21, 1895.

ARTICLE 1. Non-Mussulman Moavins of Valis have been appointed for the six vilayets, but none have yet arrived at their posts. Their names are: Selim Havsa Effendi, formerly Foreign Correspondence Clerk of the Direction of Posts and Telegraphs (a Catholic Armenian)—Erzeroum; Andon Effendi, ex-member of the Catholic Armenian Lay Council at Constantinople—Bitlis; Aristides Effendi, ex-Substitut Procureur at Smyrna (a Greek)—Sivas; Stepan Effendi, ex-Consul (a Catholic Armenian)—Kharpout; Vegleri Effendi, Graduate of the Military College (a Greek)—Diarbekir; Stepan Effendi, ex-Secretary of Legation (a Catholic Armenian)—Van.

Art. 2. As regards the Erzeroum Vilayet, it has been decided to appoint a non-Mussulman Moavin for the Sandjak of Erzinghian, but not for that of Bayazid. M. C. Syngros (Greek), at present Inspector of Agriculture at Erzeroum, has been recommended by Shakir Pasha for Erzinghian.

As regards Moavins of Sandjaks in the other vilayets, the matter has not been settled yet.

Moavins of Cazas have been decided upon for the following Cazas in the Erzeroum Vilayet, viz.: Erzinghian, Passim, Khiniss, Keghi, Erzeroum Plain, Baibourt, Kemakh, and Karakilisseh.

Arts. 3 and 4. Shakir Pasha deprecated the inability of Valis to nominate the Kaimakams.

Art. 5. Shakir Pasha has drawn up, and transmitted to Constantinople, a voluminous Report on the reorganization of the whole administrative establishment in this vilayet which will also serve as a model for the others.

As the immediate appointment of the proportionate number of non-Mussulman officials would entail either the dismissal of Mussulmans or an important addition to the expenses, the admission of non-Mussulmans into the various branches will necessarily be gradual and dependent on vacancies occurring.

Instructions have already been issued to the heads of departments to hold the object of this Article in view.

The proportion of non-Mussulman employés will be fixed on the basis of the figures in the following Table which contains the proportions of the two classes as estimated by Shakir Pasha on the information supplied to him by the local authorities:—

Vilayets.	Mussulmans, per 1,000 Inhabitants.	Armenians, per 1,000 Inhabitants.	Others, per 1,000 Inhabitants.
Erzeroum	805	158	37
Sivas	819	126	55
Bitlis	649	302	39
Van	672	230	98 (Nestorians)
Kharpout	843	135	22
Diarbekir	804	112	84

The lists of the reorganized police and gendarmerie forces, referred to under Articles 20–23, have been submitted to the Commission of Control for approval.

Art. 6. This Article elicited no special remarks from Shakir Pasha. He will make enquiries on the subject at the places he visits to see if its provisions are properly carried out.

Arts. 7–16. Annex (A) with translation, contains the circular instructions distributed to all the local authorities for their guidance in the reorganization of the Nahiehs. Later on in the spring the Mutessarifs will visit their respective districts and report as to the execution of these instructions which have been submitted to all the Valis for their approval.

Arts. 17 and 18. Annex (A) also contains instructions on the formation of the "Councils of Elders." The Mutessarifs will also report on this point.

Art. 19. Six Judicial Inspectors, three Mussulmans and three non-Mussulmans, have been appointed for the six vilayets, and are already at work, viz.:—

Tabib Effendi, President of the Penal Section of the Court of Appeal at Adrianople, and Yorghaki Effendi, Deputy Proctor-General, for Erzeroum and Diarbekir, now at the latter place.

Zuhdi Effendi, President of the Penal Section of the Court of Appeal at Monastir, and Selim Hindi Effendi, Deputy Proctor-General for Van and Bitlis, now at Van.

Reshed Effendi, President of the Penal Section of the Court of Appeal at Sivas, and Diran Effendi, Proctor-General at Smyrna, for Sivas and Kharpout, now at Sivas.

Shakir Pasha thinks that the partition of their fields of operations is bad, and he has recommended Sivas to be given to the Erzeroum Inspectors, and Kharpout to those of Diarbekir, as a more practical arrangement.

Arts. 20 and 21. Annex (B) gives the distribution of the reorganized police force for the Erzeroum Vilayet, and the number of its non-Mussulman members, based on the figures given under Article 19. This will serve as a model for the other vilayets.

The execution of the provisions of this Article will be somewhat retarded, firstly, by the want of funds, and secondly, by the necessity of waiting for the Mutessarifs' Reports on the formation of the Nahiehs. Three Armenians (Gregorian) have already been enrolled, one as Second Commissioner, and two as serjeants.

Arts. 22 and 23. On the basis of the Table given under Article 19, the following figures have been drawn up for the reorganization of the mixed gendarmerie force in the six vilayets.

Vilayets.	Cavalry.	Infantry.	Mussulmans.	Armenians.	Others.
Erzeroum	621	560	963	178	40
Sivas	690	720	1,230	189	81
Bitlis	412	610	684	329	41
Van	411	510	642	229	90 (Nestorians)
Kharpout	552	720	1,055	169	29
Diarbekir	483	560	839	116	82

Printed instructions regarding the reorganization of the gendarmerie and police have been circulated (a translation thereof was forwarded in Mr. Graves' despatch No. 207 of the 7th September, 1895).

The carrying out of this scheme will also depend on the ability of the local treasuries to meet the increased expenditure entailed by the augmentation of the forces, as it would hardly do to dismiss Mussulmans in actual service to make room for Armenians.

In the meantime a circular of the Vali has been communicated throughout the vilayet inviting Armenians to apply for service in the police and gendarmerie.

Art. 24. This Article has necessarily been left aside until the Nahieh reorganization is completed and in working order.

Art. 25. No remarks made.

Art. 26. There appears to be a reluctance on the part of Valis to give effect to Articles 11 and 12 of the Instructions relative to the General Administration of Vilayets concerning the formation of the Preliminary Commission of Inquiry, as not practicable.

Shakir Pasha has recommended the appointment of a Preliminary Commission of Inquiry at the chief town of each sandjak, similar to the one existing at the chief town of the vilayet, so as to avoid the delay in referring to the latter as necessitated by present arrangements.

Art. 27. Shakir Pasha admits that this is the most important, and, at the same time, the most difficult point. He, however, remarked, firstly, that many Kurdish tribes have not Armenians as neighbours, secondly, that, as a general rule, they do not have very far to go to reach their summer pastures, and *vice versa*, and thirdly, that all the tribes are not given to depredations.

Measures are being taken for the presence of a body of soldiers to accompany such tribes as are known to be given to molesting Armenian villages on their migrations, but to do it in every single case would entail the constant employment of a large force, and considerable expense.

As regards the Regulations on the carrying of arms, their execution is very difficult as concerns the Kurds. At present they are forbidden to come into towns armed, and, by degrees, they will be made to submit to the Regulations, which demand that no arms should be carried without a licence, the granting of which will be carefully checked and gradually curtailed.

A general disarmament by force is not contemplated, except in the Dersim, the projected expedition to which district being now no longer opposed by Zekki Pasha who is making preparations.

The continued detention, at Erzeroum, of the three Kurdish Chiefs, Hussein, Emin, and Tamir, is to be considered a device for holding them as hostages for the future good conduct of their respective tribes, though they merit a severe punishment for their doings last autumn.

Shakir Pasha has strongly recommended that Hussein Pasha should be removed to Constantinople and tried there.

Three or four of the worst Kurdish Chiefs in the Van district have also been summoned to Van, and will be detained there as hostages for the good behaviour of their tribes.

Other military precautions have been taken to protect the Armenians from Kurdish attacks.

Art. 28. The Regulations, as to the carrying of arms, to be applied to Kurds in general, as explained above, will also be enforced against the "Hamidieh" cavalry.

As these men, not their officers, have, as a rule, only their uniforms to wear, it is difficult to insist on the first paragraph of this Article as regards the non-wearing of uniforms.

The Valis have received instructions to the effect that the "Hamidieh" cavalry are to be submitted to the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals.

The contemplated Regulations determining the details of the service of this body will greatly facilitate matters, but everything depends on the nature of these Regulations. Their compilement is in the hands of the Minister of War.

Art. 29. Shakir Pasha did not seem to see the urgent necessity of Commissions for the revision of titles of property. He excepted Van because there had been one case there where a Kurdish Chief had appropriated the lands of an Armenian villager that had emigrated recently.

Art. 30. The employment of gendarmes and policemen in the collection of taxes is being discontinued, and the arrangements enacted by this Article are being introduced. Armenians are to be employed where feasible.

The plan for the formation of a special body of collectors has been prepared and sent to Constantinople for approval.

At the chief town of each vilayet there will be a Superintendent-in-chief with two serjeants (Tchaoush), four mounted and one non-mounted collector, whilst in the chief town of each sandjak there will be one serjeant with three mounted and one non-mounted collector.

The duties of these men will be to carry the tax-papers and other communications of the fiscal authorities to the "Moukhtars" and receivers of taxes in the villages.

The assistance of the gendarmes will only be given, as a last resort, when demanded by the "Moukhtars," or receivers.

Art. 31. A plan for the levying of the tithes has been drawn up. It is a compromise between the old system of farming them by district and the new method contemplated by this Article. It is to be tried in one or two Cazas this year, Baiburt for one, and its application to the six vilayets in general will depend on the success obtained in those Cazas. Communications on this subject are still being exchanged with the Government.

No observations were offered on the question of payment in kind or in money towards public works.

Shakir Pasha hopes to get the present small sum, allotted to each vilayet for purposes of education, raised to 75 per cent. of the whole revenue collected for this purpose. His object is to establish mixed (Mussulman and non-Mussulman) primary schools, under Government control, in every village, with a view to insuring a practical course of study, and in order to bring Mussulman and non-Mussulman children together.

Art. 32. This Article elicited no special remarks.

Paragraph 1. With regard to paragraph 1 annexed to the schedule, Shakir Pasha said that he had received a private letter concerning the appointment of M. G. Mavrocordato as his "Moavin," in the place of Fethy Bey Franco, and giving the reasons of M. Mavrocordato's delay in joining him, which appeared to be mainly of a personal nature.

Paragraph 2. Shakir Pasha said that the provisions of this paragraph have been fulfilled, but he was surprised to hear from me that an Armenian, who was imprisoned over six weeks ago under circumstances reported in my despatch No. 20 of the 14th February, and to whose case this paragraph applied, was still in prison here, and he promised to see that he was liberated, which has been done.

Paragraph 3. No remarks.

Paragraph 4. No remarks.

In addition to the foregoing matters, Shakir Pasha has made careful plans for the construction of new roads in this region.

In fact it is a subject to which he has devoted a great deal of time and attention.

The roads he wishes to see constructed are the following:—

1. Erzeroum, Trebizond Road, a "chaussée" from Ashkaleh, along the bank of the Euphrates, to Kadrak viâ Toulons.

This would avoid the difficult ascents of the Kop and Zigana mountains on the present route.

2. A "chaussée," Erzinghian, Keghi, Kharpout. Strategical, in view of the establishment, at the latter place, of the head-quarters of the new division, and also with a view to dividing the Dersim into two parts to facilitate any eventual military operations against the Kurds of that region.

3. A "chaussée," Erzeroum, Khiniss, Malashguird, Van, Serai, to frontier. Strategical.

4. A "chaussée" (Erzeroum, Khiniss) Boulanik, Moush, Bitlis, Sairt, Diarbekir.

5. A road from Erzeroum to the forests of Emir Kaz through the pass of Kourdji Boghaz.

A sub-Commission has also been sitting all the winter, under the presidency of Hassib Effendi, second Secretary of Haskir Pasha's mission, to discuss measures of general improvement. The Commission is composed of the various heads of departments and of leading men of the different communities.

Many projects have resulted from their labours, but nothing special has actually been carried out.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Erzeroum, March 31, 1896.

Annex (A).

Circular.—Instructions respecting Nahiehs.

1.—*Plan of Reorganization.*

(Translation.)

Article 1. There will be two categories of Nahiehs, organized in conformity with the existing Regulations on Nahiehs. One will be composed of one village, according to the present number of its inhabitants, and the other of several villages, of which one will be chosen as the centre on account of its position.

In a village forming a Nahieh by itself the reorganization and the elections will naturally be confined to such village.

Art. 2. In a Nahieh formed, as mentioned above, of several villages, these must not be further than three hours off from the central village, and they must contain together not less than 2,000 and not more than 10,000 inhabitants.

Care must also be taken that they are not separated from it by high mountains or other such natural obstacles.

Art. 3. In the selection of the chief village of a Nahieh, its central position must be taken into account as well as its number of its inhabitants, its prosperity, and the fact of its containing mixed communities.

Art. 4. In the formation of Nahiehs the existing organization must not be taken into account, but the provisions of the foregoing Article 2 must be attended to, and, according to the necessities of the situation and the general connection of the villages to each other, one or more villages can be separated from another Nahieh or Caza and included in the new Nahieh.

2.—*Administration of Nahiehs.*

Art. 5. Each Nahieh will be administered by a Mudir and a Council composed of four elected members.

Art. 6. The Council of elected members will elect a Mudir and his Moavin (assistant) from among themselves, and they will appoint a clerk (kiatib).

Art. 7. When, in a Nahieh composed of Mussulmans and Christians, the Mudir is a Mussulman, the Moavin must be a Christian, and *vice versâ*.

Art. 8. The salaries of the Mudir and the clerk must be paid by the Nahieh.

The duties of the Mudir and the Nahieh Council are to be in conformity with paragraphs 20 to 27 of the existing Regulations on Nahiehs.

Art. 9. The Bekdjis (Guards) of villages are to be selected, according to requirement, by the Nahieh Council from the different classes (nationalities), and their names must be reported to the Central Government by the Mudirs.

Art. 10. In addition to the Nahieh Council an Ikhtiar Medjliss (Council of Elders) and a Moukhtar (Headman) must be elected by the inhabitants of each village.

In large villages, composed of several quarters and containing mixed communities, a Moukhtar for each quarter and each community is to be appointed when necessary.

Art. 11. The Ikhtiar Medjliss will be presided over by the Moukhtar. The duties of the Medjliss will consist in amicably settling differences that arise between the inhabitants, as provided for by the existing Regulations concerning the Ikhtiar Medjliss.

3.—*Mode of Election.*

Art. 12. The qualifications required of candidates for the Nahieh Council are clearly set forth in Article 10 of the existing Regulations on Nahiehs.

A candidate must be (1) an Ottoman subject and an owner of property in the Nahieh; (2) over 30 years of age; (3) a tax-payer, rated in the first class, and a man of honourable character; (4) he must not have been condemned during his life on political or criminal charges.

Art. 13. Imams, priests, other religious functionaries, schoolmasters, and persons

in Government employ, are not eligible, even if they should possess the aforementioned qualifications.

In each Nahieh a list of respectable persons possessing the aforementioned qualifications is to be drawn up and sent to the local Government.

Art. 14. If the local Government, after examining the list, finds no objection, well and good; but if objectionable names are contained in the list, the elections will only be authorized to take place after these have been eliminated.

Art. 15. In a Nahieh composed of only one village, the Moukhtars of the quarters will assemble, and each one will select six names from the list of candidates, and, after writing their names on a slip of paper and affixing their respective seals, they will deliver each list to the Nahieh Council in a closed envelope. Finally, the papers will all be opened at the same time in the presence of the Nahieh Council. The number of votes gained by each candidate will be written against his name. The six who obtain most votes will be elected, and a Report containing the names of the candidates and the number of votes obtained by each of them must be sent in by the Council.

Art. 16. In a Nahieh composed of several villages, the Moukhtar of each village and quarter will also select six members, and proceed in the same way as stated in the foregoing Article.

Art. 17. The Nahieh Mudir and half of the members of the Council are elected for two years and the other half for one year, it being understood that those who secure the greatest number of votes are elected for two years and the others for one. These facts are to be mentioned in the election list.

Art. 18. As at the first formation of the Nahiehs there will be no Nahieh Council existing, the first election-papers must be sent to the Medjliss (Council) of the nearest Caza, before which, when all the papers are collected, the election-papers of each Nahieh will be opened in the presence of the members of the Medjliss; they will be examined, and the members having been selected according to the votes, their election-papers shall be carefully scrutinized.

Art. 19. Once the election of the Nahieh Council is over and the Regulations have been fulfilled, one or more Government officials will be present at subsequent annual elections to see that the Regulations are complied with, but not to interfere in such elections.

Art. 20. As mentioned in Article 17, according to the Nahieh Regulations, the Mudir and the members of the Council having been elected, half the members must be changed every year and others elected in their places. For this purpose the Moukhtars must select three names only instead of six.

Art. 21. The Mudir and the members of the Nahieh Council who retire at the end of the year, in the manner explained in the foregoing Article, can be re-elected, and such re-election is to be for two years.

4.—*Mode of Voting.*

Art. 22. A Moukhtar once elected, it will be, of course, known what the number of the voting population is, and each Moukhtar will be considered as having as many votes as there are voters.

Art. 23. Consequently, in the election-lists for Nahieh Councils, the number of votes belonging to each Moukhtar will be entered against his name, and these votes will be reckoned up and the selection of the members of the Nahieh Council will be governed by the number of such votes.

Art. 24. If the inhabitants of a village, or a portion thereof comprising twenty houses, are not content to be represented at the elections by the duly chosen Moukhtar of that village, they can charge one of their own number to represent them, and, consequently, the number of votes their special delegate possesses will be deducted from those possessed by the Moukhtar.

Art. 25. In such cases, the name of this special delegate and the number of votes he represents must be communicated by the Council of Elders to the nearest authorities, who will examine the case and act accordingly.

Annex (B).

Police Reorganization in the Erzeroum Vilayet.

Sandjaks.	Districts.	1st Commissioners.		2nd Commissioners.		3rd Commissioners.		Policemen.	
		Musulmans.	Christians.	Musulmans.	Christians.	Musulmans.	Christians.	Musulmans.	Christians.
Erzeroum	Chief town of vilayet	1	..	1	1	2	2	8	2
	Erzeroum (ova) Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Tepir Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Keskine Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Tortoum and Naverman Casa.	..	..	..	..	1	..	3	..
	Baiburt Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	1
	Terdjan Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Passin Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Khinis Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Keghi Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Total for sandjak	1		1	1	11	2	22	7
Bayazid	Chief town of sandjak	..	..	1	..	1	1	4	1
	Bayazid and Deyadin Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	3	..
	Karakilisseh Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Alashguird Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Aintab	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Total for sandjak	..	..	1	..	5	1	11	2
Erzinghian	Chief town of sandjak	..	..	1	..	1	1	3	2
	Plumer Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Rifahiyé Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Kuri-tchai Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
	Kemakh Cam	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Erzinghian Caza	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	Total for sandjak	..	..	1	..	5	1	11	4
	Total for vilayet	1	..	3	1	22	4	44	13
	Already in service	1	..	1	..	4	..	21	..
	Additions	..	..	2	1	18	4	23	13

No. 36.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 291.)
My Lord, *Pera, April* 16, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a document which has been communicated to me by the Armenian Patriarch containing the account of the massacres at Trebizond given by the Chief of Gendarmerie of that town. This coincides with the information that has reached the Embassy from other sources.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Paper communicated by the Armenian Patriarch.

(Confidentielle.)

LE 27 Février (v. s.), 1896, est arrivé devant Ordou le bateau de la Compagnie Russe "Nahimoff" à bord duquel se trouvait le Commandant de la Gendarmerie de Trébizonde.

Au cours d'une conversation avec un Arménien, à laquelle assistait aussi Miradj Bey, Agent de Police à Ordou, le Tabour Aghassi a fait les déclarations suivantes :—

"C'est Kadri Bey, le Vali de Trébizonde, qui a ordonné et fait exécuter les massacres de cette ville; c'est ce lâche assassin qui a fait cruellement tuer les pauvres boutiquiers et artisans pendant qu'ils vaquaient paisiblement à leurs affaires. Tout en faisant exécuter cette tuerie il me donnait l'ordre de lui livrer, en plus de ceux qui se trouvaient déjà en sa possession, 300 fusils Martini; j'ai répondu par un refus catégorique; mais passant outre de mon consentement, il les a fait retirer lui-même du dépôt militaire et distribuer à ses hordes. C'est à la suite de cette conduite que nous avons vu des brigands, au nombre de 150, que la gendarmerie poursuivait depuis cinq ans dans les montagnes, massacrer librement dans le chef-lieu même du vilayet les malheureux Arméniens.

"Moi et le Président du Tribunal Correctionnel avons adressé un Rapport à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan pour faire connaître la vérité; sur un Iradé Impérial nous nous rendons actuellement à Constantinople pour donner des renseignements complémentaires; nous espérons fermement que nous parviendrons à faire punir l'ignoble assassin qui a pour nom Kadri Bey."

No. 37.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 292.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 16, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Angora reporting the murder of five Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Acting Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, April* 9, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I hear on good authority that five Armenians were assassinated while asleep in a mill near the village of Yoghounese on the 21st ultimo.

It appears that these men, whose names were Sivasli Durtad, Kirkor Imirjeyan, Bedros Imirjeyan, Mugeditch Ghyuncleyan, and Matteos Sahagyan, were natives of the village of Chakmak, and were on their way to Boghazleyan, when, night coming on, they took refuge in a mill which is about 3 miles distant from the latter town, and 50 miles or so due north of Cæsarea.

It would appear that they were killed as they slept, one of them having had his head split open with an axe, while the others were all more or less horribly mutilated. There seems to be no doubt that Turks were the authors of this outrage, those of them on whom suspicion has fallen being already in prison.

The Kaimakam of Oozoonloo, in whose district the murder was committed, has, I am informed, acted with great energy and promptitude, so that now it only remains to be seen whether the conduct of the judicial authorities in this matter will be equally deserving of praise.

I regret that the news of this occurrence should have been so long in reaching me, but, owing to an unusually protracted winter and the consequent heavy, and in many

parts impracticable, state of the roads, news travels just now remarkably slowly. Even as it is, I believe I am the only person in Angora who has heard of this tragic event with the exception, of course, of some of the authorities, who have every reason for abstaining from making the matter public.

Any further details I may learn I shall not fail to communicate to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 38.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 233.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 16, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana reporting on a Turkish raid that had taken place in the district of Jebel Bereket.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Mersina, March* 29, 1896.

WITH reference to the reported disturbances at Ekbez and Islahié, in the Jebel Bereket sub-district, which were doubtless communicated to your Excellency previous to my arrival in my district, I have the honour to report that the French Consul resident at Mersina has informed me that he has ascertained, during a visit which he made to the Governor-General at Adana, that the affair arose out of an incursion of Kurds, with the intention of plundering the Trappist establishment between Ekbez and Islahié. The military forces sent from Yarbouz—the seat of the Government of the sub-district—succeeded in restoring order without difficulty.

I beg to report that on the night of the 23rd instant, previous to my arrival, four murders were committed in the town of Mersina, in a house of bad repute. The matter appears to have no political importance, and is still under legal investigation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 39.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 291.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 16, 1896.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 127 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to state that the telegrams which I have received from Bitlis and Kharput continue to report that the authorities at those places do not act on the instructions sent to them by the Porte, but insist on the relief being sent to the Government Konak, or being distributed by the Local Commission jointly with the missionaries.

The Foreign Minister, to whom I have made constant representations, could give no satisfactory explanation of this disregard of the Porte's orders, and I have found it necessary to use very stringent language in order to put a stop to a state of things which would divert the money collected in England and the United States from its proper channels.

I instructed Mr. Block to say to the Foreign Minister that if the matter was not put at once on a satisfactory footing, I should ask your Lordship to propose to the United States' Government that we should send a joint Mission to all the centres of distribution to report on the conduct of the authorities.

Tevfik Pasha promised to send further telegrams, but they were still without result, and yesterday morning I sent Mr. Block to repeat my warning at the Palace.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of his report of what took place, which throws a curious light on the relations between the Palace and Porte. Izzet Bey, as the mouthpiece of the Sultan, declares that everything is in the hands of the Porte, while the Ministers protest that they can do nothing without the Sultan's Iradé; that the so-called Council of Ministers is a mere form, and that it meets only to register the orders sent to it through Izzet Bey.

Mr. Block succeeded after a long day's work in obtaining a renewed assurance that the Valis at Bitlis and Kharput would be categorically instructed to allow the distribution of relief subject to the presence of a member of the Commission.

It remains to be seen whether these instructions will receive more attention than they have during the past few weeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

IN accordance with your instructions I saw the Sultan's First Secretary this morning, and requested him to lay before the Sultan the difficulties that had been met with in the distribution of relief.

I said that after some trouble your Excellency had received from the Foreign Minister an assurance in writing that the money could be distributed by the agents appointed by Mr. Whittall's Committee, provided that a member of the local Turkish Commission was present; that, notwithstanding the decision of the Porte, the local authorities had insisted on various occasions that the money should be handed to the Turkish Commission or the Government, and you had been obliged to make innumerable representations to the Porte; that the Porte had sent telegraphic instructions time after time, but the local authorities disregarded the orders; the Vali of Bitlis and the Vali of Kharput were now raising difficulties, and your Excellency was at a loss to understand how they could thus disobey the Porte's orders; that you had reported the matter to Her Majesty's Government, and had to-day received a telegram from Sir Thomas Sanderson stating that the action of the Governors in the provinces in this matter had produced a deplorable effect in England; that you therefore applied direct to His Majesty the Sultan, and appealed to him to put an end to this state of things; that unless a satisfactory settlement of the matter was at once decided upon, your Excellency would be obliged to suggest to Her Majesty's Government that a proposal should be made to the President of the United States to send a Commissioner, who would be accompanied by a British Commissioner, to distribute relief, and that your Excellency would utilize probably the services of Colonel Chermside and Her Majesty's Consular officers, who would proceed to the various centres for distribution. I complained of the apathy and weakness of the Porte, which sent orders which were entirely neglected, and I said that you desired the Sultan to cause inquiry to be made as to who was supporting the local Governors in their opposition to the Porte's authority.

The First Secretary took down my observations and submitted them in writing to His Majesty, who sent word to say I should call for an answer in the evening. At 8 o'clock accordingly I went again to the Palace, and the only reply I could get was that this was a matter concerning the Porte, and that I should see the Grand Vizier. I did not conceal from the First Secretary that this answer was far from satisfactory, that you had made every possible effort to settle the matter at the Porte, but without success, and that you had as a last resource appealed to the Sultan to set the matter straight once for all, which His Majesty could do in a moment by an order to the Porte. Izzet Bey also came into the First Secretary's room and joined in the conversation. I said that the effect of all this was deplorable. Here were thousands of His Majesty's subjects starving, and yet the relief collected in England was withheld from them by the disobedience of the local authorities and the weakness of the Porte, and yet His Majesty declined to assist you. How was it possible, I asked, to revive the sympathy of England for the Sultan and his country if all your representations were disregarded, and when you appealed to the Sultan you met with the reply that the Porte must deal with the matter? Izzet Bey briefly replied that he was doing what he could, but it was useless to expect anything so long as Murad Bey remained

in Egypt. "Give him up," he said, "and I shall be able to assist you." I saw it was no use continuing the discussion, so I proceeded to the house of the Grand Vizier, where I met his Highness and the Foreign Minister. Izzet Bey arrived a few minutes after me, and saw the Grand Vizier before I did.

I told his Highness what I had said at the Palace and the reply I had been given, and I called upon him and the Foreign Minister to settle this question once and for all. After half-an-hour's conversation, the Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister authorized me to state to you that a telegram would be sent to Bitlis and Kharput to-night instructing the Valis categorically to allow the distribution of relief under the condition that a member of the Turkish Commission was present, and they expressed the hope that no further difficulties would arise.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

April 15, 1896.

No. 40.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 20.)

(No. 295.)

My Lord, *Pera, April* 16, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Angora, respecting the dismissal of the Mutessarif of Kirshehr, and the turbulent character of the Moslem Notables of that district.

The new Mutessarif is Safvet Pasha, who is said to belong to the "Jeune Turquie" party.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Acting Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, April* 10, 1896.

WITH reference to my Confidential despatch of the 10th ultimo, and others which preceded it on the same subject, I have the honour to report that, according to information received from a reliable source, Aarifi Bey, the Mutessarif of Kirshehr, has been dismissed from his post. I think that this fact, if confirmed, should be considered a matter for congratulation, not so much because Aarifi Bey has been guilty of any flagrant act of maladministration or injustice, but because he has shown himself incapable of curbing and restraining the arrogant and law-defying spirit which is now, and has been for many years, so marked a characteristic of the chief Moslem notables of that town and district.

It is hardly too much to say that the administration of the Kirshehr district is practically in the hands of a clique of Turkish Aghas, most of whom belong to one family, and each and every one of whom does apparently exactly what is good in his own eyes, regarding his own interests and those of his connections and friends. This clique consists of Hussein Agha, the most important and most influential, his brother Siddik Agha, his sons Riza Bey and Eesed Agha, his son-in-law, Mustapha Effendi, Chief Clerk to the local Government, Saïd Effendi, the Executive Officer ("idjra mémouri"), and a certain Saïd Agha. There are others who, however, are of less importance.

These men, through their wealth both in house and landed property, and the influence derived from their wide-spread family connections, appear to be all-powerful, none of the authorities, from the Mutessarif downwards, venturing to call in question any act of theirs, however illegal or even criminal its nature. They monopolize the farming of the tithes and other taxes, exercise considerable influence over the agricultural banks, and are represented in the tribunals by their friends and partisans, so that even supposing an action were brought against any member of their body, he would be sure to obtain a verdict in his favour. Loud complaints have been made against the existing state of things from time to time for some years past, some of which have even reached Constantinople, but with no appreciable result, the influence of these men being, I am assured, as great as ever. It would appear that Hussein Agha

received on one occasion a peremptory order from Constantinople to proceed forthwith to Angora in order to undergo an inquiry as to the many complaints which had been formulated against him; but he refused to comply with the order, and, persisting in the refusal, ultimately gained his point.

On another occasion three of these Aghas were ordered by the then Vali, Abedin Pasha, to come to Angora, to answer certain charges which had been brought against them, and it was hoped that an end would be put to these abuses. However, in reply to the summons they used arguments of so eloquent and convincing a character, that Abedin Pasha changed his mind and ceased to press the point.

I complained, at the beginning of this despatch, of A'arifi Bey's incapacity to resist the outrageous pretensions of these Aghas, but perhaps it is unreasonable of me to expect any average Governor, or one who is rather above the average, to set his face resolutely against what has become a long established system, viz., the rule of Kirshehr by this clique. In fact, I am not sure that any Mutessarif could hope to retain his post for any length of time unless he made up his mind to swim with the tide. Only one remedy appears to me to be likely to be at all efficacious, and that is the disruption of this band by order sent direct from Constantinople, and its distribution over various parts of the vilayet. I would point out that the principal sufferers from the existing state of things are Moslems, not only because they are in a very large majority, but also because they are for the most part poor and defenceless. The Christian element, which is very small, is mostly confined to the towns, where they are nearly all engaged in trade, and where by systematic submission to the Aghas and their friends with whom they are in the closest commercial and financial relations, they contrive to escape, to a great extent, these acts of oppression and cruelty which are of such common occurrence in the country districts. It is true that they were recently the victims of a ferocious attack on the part of a Mussulman mob, but it is none the less certain that, as explained in a previous despatch, this was the outcome of an organized movement originated by certain Turkish notables with a view to cause a disturbance which would have a prejudicial effect on the reputation and position of the Mutessarif, as indeed has proved to be the case, rather than of any widespread feeling of fanaticism or detestation of the Christians as such.

I should mention here that I was wrong, it appears, in stating in a previous despatch that it was at Hussein Agha's instigation that the Christians were attacked. I am now informed that a certain Saïd Agha, the son of the Mufti, was at the bottom of this movement, and not the head of the clique. Not that the latter would hesitate to massacre Christians if it suited his policy, or jumped with his humour of the moment to do so, as is very evident from the following story which is full of grim significance:—

On one occasion Hussein Agha was making some purchases in the principal druggist's shop of the town, the only other persons present being the proprietor of the shop, an Armenian, and another shopkeeper of the same nationality. In the course of conversation mention was made of the rumour then prevalent that Russian troops were marching down through Armenia into Anatolia. Thereupon Hussein Agha rose abruptly from his seat and said, "If I find that it is really true that Russian troops are invading Anatolia, or that, as others say, English troops have been landed at Adalia, let them know," with a sharp horizontal sawing motion of the hand, "that there are no Christians in Kirshehr." I had this story from the Armenian shopkeeper who was present at the time, and who, were his life worth half-an-hour's purchase after he had done so, would give evidence on oath to this effect in a Court of law.

I could enumerate many instances of the lawlessness and oppressive conduct of the various members of the Hussein Agha clique, but to do so would lengthen this despatch most unduly. I will merely mention a most characteristic fact, viz., that Siddik Agha (Hussein's brother) has in his employment a certain Kenprili Mustapha, a notorious criminal, who is known to have committed fifteen deeds of violence, most of which had fatal consequences, within the borders of this vilayet. This ruffian's most recent exploits was the murder (last year) of two Greeks, father and son, at a spot which is about halfway between Kirshehr and Koniah. The matter, strange to say, was brought to the notice of the local authorities who arrested the guilty man, and sent him for trial to Kirshehr, where he was found guilty and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude. After Mustapha had been three months in prison, Siddik Agha brought his influence to bear on the case, obtained the release of the prisoner, and took him again into his service, in which position he still remains a terror to the whole neighbourhood.

I venture to think that no further instance is necessary to establish the urgency

of the case which requires that the most radical measures should be at once applied, and of these the simplest, it appears to me, would be the dispersion of these Aghas throughout the vilayet, or even their banishment to neighbouring provinces. The mere change of Governors, unless the Mutessarif selected for the post be a remarkably able and energetic man, enjoying resolute and continuous support from head-quarters, is only a palliative which is likely enough to prove worse than useless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 41.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 300.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 16, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that within the last few days the French and Russian Ambassadors have shown a revival of interest in the condition of the Anatolian provinces and the execution of the reforms.

M. de Nélidow informed me that he had received serious reports from his Vice-Consul at Van respecting the attitude of the Kurds, and asked me to join with him in bringing the matter to the notice of the Porte. I at once agreed to do so, adding that I had for some time past been making representations on the subject.

M. Cambon volunteered to send his First Dragoman to the Reform Commission, and also proposed joint action of the three Embassies against the appointment of a Mussulman Kaimakam at Zeitoun which was announced yesterday in the press. This appointment is contrary to the Reform Decree, and also to the understanding arrived at by the mediation of the Consuls with the Zeitounlis.

I accordingly instructed Mr. Block to accompany his French and Russian colleagues to the Porte, and I inclose a report which he has drawn up of their interview with the Foreign Minister.

I at the same time wrote a note to my French collegue suggesting that, as the question has been raised in the Zeitoun negotiation, the Dragomans of the Austrian, German, and Italian Embassies should be asked to join in the representations. I have not received a reply to this suggestion, but I understand that M. Cambon was anxious that the step should in the first instance be taken by the three Embassies only, on the ground that it concerned primarily the Reforms, the supervision of which was intrusted more particularly to the three Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

IN accordance with instructions, together with my French and Russian collegues, I called at the Porte to-day during the sitting of the Council of Ministers, and we requested an interview with the Foreign Minister.

M. Rouet stated that we had been instructed by our respective Ambassadors to express their surprise at the announcement which had appeared in the Turkish press to-day to the effect that a Turkish Kaimakam had been appointed to Zeitoun, that this was a distinct breach of the assurance given by the Porte when the Zeitounlis surrendered that a Christian Kaimakam would be appointed, and that the three Ambassadors, in calling his Excellency's attention to the fact, trusted that the appointment would be cancelled.

I said that I was instructed by your Excellency formally to protest against the nomination of Mahmoud Bey, the person in question, as such an appointment was in contradiction to the letter and spirit of the reforms granted by the Sultan, and which were applicable, as clearly stated, to Zeitoun. I requested his Excellency to call the attention of his colleagues to the matter and to give us a favourable reply at an early date.

My Russian collegue supported our representations, and the Foreign Minister said he would at once inquire into the matter.

M. Maximow then stated that the reports from the Russian Consul, which were confirmed by the British Vice-Consul, gave an alarming account of the situation at Van, and that he was instructed to urge the Porte to send immediate telegraphic instructions for measures to be taken to keep the Kurds in order; failing such measures it was almost certain that serious disturbances would occur.

M. Rouet and myself supported M. Maximow, and I added that the Vali of Van was either very badly informed or was wilfully deceiving his Government, and I instanced what had occurred a few days ago. I had warned the Porte that the Kurds were threatening Armenian villages in the neighbourhood of Van, and I had urged the Porte to telegraph to the Vali to take repressive and precautionary measures. A few days later I had informed the Porte that the Kurds had attacked some Armenian villages, killing some of the inhabitants. A week later the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs had shown me the same day two telegrams from the Vali of Van, the first stating that the state of the vilayet left nothing to be desired, and that the Kurds were not to be feared, whilst the second stated that the disturbance in question had taken place. The Vali was, therefore, deserving of the strongest censure. The Foreign Minister said the Porte hoped to have him dismissed shortly.

M. Maximow then spoke of the Valis of Diarbekir and Adana, who, he said, were quite unfitted for their posts, and should have been dismissed long ago. M. Rouet and myself concurred with our Russian colleague, and upon Tevfik Pasha faintly agreeing with us and saying that no doubt they were not fitted for their posts, I repeated to him what the First Secretary had told me this morning, viz., that if the Porte found the local authorities disobedient or unfitted for their posts, it remained with the Porte either to insist upon their obeying instructions or to request that they should be removed, but that if the Porte made no observations and allowed things to go from bad to worse the Ministers were deeply responsible for such neglect of their proper duties. The Foreign Minister seemed much surprised at this statement, which it seems that the Sultan made himself also to M. Cambon. As a matter of fact I know that the Ministers have suggested to the Palace on more than one occasion that the Vali of Diarbekir should be dismissed, but without success.

We said that his Excellency should call the attention of the Council of Ministers to this statement made by the Palace, and endeavour to put a little backbone into his colleagues, and to persuade them to act with more energy and severity, for they would assuredly be held responsible for the misgovernment and maladministration which existed throughout the Empire.

M. Maximow called his Excellency's attention to the conduct of the Vali of Sivas, who, upon going on a tour of inspection in his province, instead of leaving his Christian Moavin in charge, confided the duties to the Mufti! His Excellency admitted this was wrong, but did not suggest a remedy, and M. Maximow said that was an example of the manner in which the reforms were everywhere left in abeyance.

I said that I was sorry that Memdouh Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, was not present to hear what we had to say, but M. Maximow observed that on this point only he regretted to differ with me, since he had no desire whatsoever to see Memdouh Pasha on this or on any other occasion.

I have to add that several Ministers met this evening at 9 o'clock to discuss the Zeitoun question and other points of the schedule of Reforms. The meeting was at the Grand Vizier's house, and consisted of the Grand Vizier, the Foreign Minister, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Public Works, the President of the Council of State, and Izzet Bey.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

April 15, 1896.

No. 42.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 23, 1896, 2·30 P.M.*

MR. BARNHAM telegraphs from Marash that the troops are being withdrawn from Zeitoun, and that only the ordinary garrison will remain there.

No. 43.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 24.)

(No. 136.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 24, 1896, 10·30 P.M.*

MR. VICE-CONSUL FITZ-MAURICE has sent me several important despatches giving details of massacres in various places which he visited, and reporting on the forced conversions at Biredjik and elsewhere. Copies will be forwarded home by Monday's post.

I am having them printed for communication to my colleagues, as I propose to invite their co-operation in the question of the forced conversions.

No. 44.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 301.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 18, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I learn from the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs that according to reports received from the Vali of Adana, the authorities have lately seized at Kurd Daghi, and Kharsa and confined in the fort of Pias, eight Kurds who are guilty of outrages.

I have asked Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana whether he has any information confirming these reports.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 45.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 306.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 19, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 116 of the 21st March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Aleppo giving details of the recent disturbances at Killis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Aleppo, April 2, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 21st, 23rd, and 25th ultimo, reporting the disturbances which recently occurred at Killis, I have now the honour to transmit to your Excellency the following details which I have gathered from different reliable sources.

The disturbance seems to have originated in a quarrel between an Armenian and a Turk, resulting in a general attack on the Armenians, which lasted twenty-eight hours, that is to say, from Friday at about 10 o'clock till Saturday at 2 o'clock. At the time of the outbreak, both the Kaïmakam and the Military Commander, "Yuz Bashi," were out of the town; the former had come to Aleppo the day before, and returned to his post only after the troubles had begun

There were in Killis only two companies of soldiers, and they made no very great effort to stop the plunder. In fact, in many cases they were the chief plunderers.

Twenty-five persons in all were killed in the town itself, amongst whom an Armeno-Catholic priest named Ohannès Vartabet. Some seventy others lost their lives in the surrounding vineyards or whilst fleeing for refuge into the town. The majority of the dead are Gregorians; only three or four Catholics having been murdered.

Several Mahommedans, among the more noteworthy of whom are certain, Saleh Effendi Zada Assim, Muhluss Effendi, and Hadji Mehemet Effendi, did their best to protect the Christians and afford them shelter.

Grave fears, however, are entertained as to the fate of the Armenians in the neighbouring hamlets, although no details are as yet to hand.

Subsequent to the disturbance, a mob of Kurds from the outlying districts hurried down to the town, but were prevented from entering, and were compelled to retire. Certain European travellers on their way to Alexandretta met hundreds of them retiring from Killis empty-handed, and very indignant that they had not been allowed a part in the plunder. They, however, succeeded in pillaging the so-called Bayram Oghlu's Han on the Aleppo-Alexandretta road, which was kept by Armenians. It is also reported that the same Kurds proceeded afterwards to Akbiz, with a view to attack the French missionaries there, but they were repulsed by the Mutessarif of Djebel-Barakat, who arrived with a strong escort of zaptiehs just in time to rescue these establishments. The whole of the troops sent by the Vali to suppress the riot in Killis, have now been dispatched to Kurd Daghi and the principal villages with orders to keep the Kurds in check.

According to latest information, some ten or twelve wounded Armenians are now lying in the Gregorian Church, and although several days have elapsed since the date of the disturbance, not a single Christian is to be seen in the streets, nor has a single Armenian ventured to open his shop; in fact, a great part of the market is closed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. CATONI.

No. 46.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 307.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 21, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 226 of the 20th March, I have the honour to report that the Commission of Control, after having suspended its meetings for a considerable time, has again resumed them.

On the 16th instant Mr. Block and M. Rouet, the French Dragoman, attended the sitting. I inclose a full report by the former of what passed, and of the information which was given by the President in reply to the inquiries of the Dragomans.

Your Lordship will see that some small progress has been made on paper, but I regret to add that very few reforms have been put into practical execution.

There seems to be no reason to complain of the President, Chefik Bey, and the members of the Commission are fairly well disposed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I CALLED yesterday upon the Commission of Control. My French colleague, M. Rouet, accompanied me.

We went through the reforms, Article by Article, and I have to report the following observations:—

Article 1. Christian assistants to Valis.—These functionaries have all left for their posts, but the Commission is not informed as to their having taken up the duties of their office.

I brought to the notice of the Commission that the Vali of Sivas, Halib Bey, had left Sivas for a journey of inspection in the province, and had confided the duties of Acting Vali at Sivas to the Mufti. This, I said, was quite irregular; the Christian Mouavin was at Sivas, and should have been intrusted with the Vali's duties.

The President of the Commission promised to call the attention of the Grand Vizier to this irregularity, and to suggest that a Circular should be addressed to the Valis in order that no repetition of the same should occur.

M. Rouet raised a question of the exequaturs of the Mouavins, and we were informed that "Berats" were given to functionaries of this category, who were employés of the first class ("oula sanaf evvel," corresponding to "Ferik," General of Division), and to those below that rank a "Roous" was issued, but in neither case was the exequatur publicly read on arrival at their post, as in the case of Valis.

Article 2.—No Christian assistants to Mutessarifs or Kaïmakams have been appointed. The Commission is, however, in correspondence with Shakir Pasha and the Governors-General of the six vilayets, and will let me know their decision shortly.

Article 3. Kaïmakams.—M. Rouet and I called the attention of the Commission to the nomination of a Moslem Kaïmakam to Zeitoun. The President at first declined to discuss the question, saying that the Kaïmakams were chosen by the Minister of the Interior, but after some discussion he consented to draw the attention of the Grand Vizier to the matter in a special Report.

I asked how many Christian Kaïmakams had been appointed in the six vilayets, and upon the President replying that none had yet been named, I urged the Commission very strongly to take the matter in hand.

A discussion followed as to the number of Kaïmakams of the Christian faith who should be appointed. The Commission seemed to think that as nothing was said about the number of non-Moslem Kaïmakams in Article 3, the number was therefore not fixed, and as these officials were to be chosen by the Minister of the Interior and named by Imperial Iradé (Article 3), the Commission therefore had nothing to say in the matter. I strenuously combated this reasoning, pointing out that the essence of the reforms, so frequently explained by your Excellency to the Sultan, was the proportional representation of Armenians throughout all branches of the Administration, and I pointed out further that Article 5 was explicit on the point, and clearly referred to Kaïmakams, as well as police and gendarmerie. (The printed French text is not so clear, but, fortunately, the Turkish text admits of no doubt.)

Finally, the Commission decided to make a Report to the Grand Vizier asking for the appointment of Christian Kaïmakams.

In the six vilayets there are ninety cazas, and a proportion of these should be governed by non-Moslem Kaïmakams.

It might be advisable to obtain the support of the Russian Embassy on this point, as well as on the question of Christian Mutessarifs, which I maintained were also provided for by the Schedule.

Article 6.—The President informed me that instructions had been sent to the various administrative centres on the subject of the Councils of sandjaks and cazas. They have not yet elicited any reply, and the President said he would again send instructions.

Articles 7–16. "Nahiés."—This question is still under consideration, and the President is awaiting replies to the Circular sent asking for information.

Articles 17, 18. Justice.—The President stated that the Minister of Justice had been pressed to draw up Regulations with regard to the Council of Ancients and Juges de Paix.

Article 19.—No reports have yet been received from the Judicial Inspectors, who were to report every three months. The Inspectors are all said to be at work.

I pointed out that a crying abuse was the state of the prisons, and that instructions should be sent to the Inspectors to see that the prisoners were not detained without fair trial. Her Majesty's Embassy had numerous reports that Armenians were imprisoned for months without trial. The President said he would write to the Grand Vizier on the subject.

Articles 20, 21.—The police at Erzeroum will be organized as follows:—

	1st Class Commissioner.	2nd Class Commissioner.	3rd Class Commissioner.	Agents.	Total.
Moslem	1	4	25	57	87
Non-Moslem	..	1	4	13	18
					105

The police at Sivas, as follows:—

	1st Class Commissioner.	2nd Class Commissioner.	3rd Class Commissioner.	Agents.	Total.
Moslem	1	5	32	69	107

In this vilayet the number of non-Moslems is not yet fixed; it will be in the proportion of 18 per cent., and orders have been sent to this effect.

No report has been received as to whether these men are yet efficient. They exist, as yet, only on paper.

Articles 22, 23. Gendarmerie.—The numbers have been fixed, but there have been difficulties in finding Armenians willing to serve. The President has given further instructions to the Valis.

Article 24. "Gardes Champêtres."—Left until the "Nahié" organization is completed.

Articles 25, 26. "Prisons et Comité d'Enquête Préliminaire."—Both M. Rouet and myself spoke strongly on this subject, and the Commission will request the Grand Vizier to send further instructions to Judicial Inspectors.

Article 27. "Contrôle des Kurdes."—This most important point, I said, had been entirely neglected. The President admitted it, but said it could only be done by degrees. As to the "port d'armes," the Commission thinks a new Regulation for the provinces must be drawn up.

I said that, as regards Article 28 ("Cavalerie Hamidié), Her Majesty's Embassy had reports showing that the Kurds still wore their uniform and badges (in the Vilayet of Sivas, for instance), and as long as these men could murder and pillage with impunity, relying on their uniforms to resist successfully the authorities, and maintaining that they were not amenable to the ordinary Courts of Justice, and recognized no authority but that of Zekki Pasha, Commandant of the IVth Army Corps, miles and miles away, there was no hope of restoring and maintaining order, or of protecting the defenceless villagers who crossed their path.

The President said that Regulations had been drawn up, and the Valis had been instructed to carry out the provisions of this Article. Further instructions would now be sent both to Valis and judicial authorities.

Article 29. "Titres de Propriété."—Not touched upon.

Article 30. "Perception des impôts."—The President said the question was receiving careful consideration, but until a special body of collectors was organized, the authorities were obliged to use the police and gendarmerie to collect taxes. He hoped this matter would soon be settled.

Article 31. "Dîmes."—This question is also being taken in hand.

1. The assistant to Shakir Pasha has at last left for his post.

2. M. Rouet and I decided not to go into the question of the amnesty until we had more complete information, though we mentioned that in some cases His Majesty's pardon had remained a dead letter.

3. "Rentrée des émigrés."

4. We pointed out that the reforms must be applied to Zeitoun and Hajjin.

To conclude, I found the Commission was doing its best under difficult circumstances, though the result is very small. I have shown in previous Reports how the members, though willing and assiduous, are hampered by being unpaid, and employed in various Ministries in addition to their duties as members of the Commission. The want of authority, and the natural dislike of the Turkish official to take any initiative or assume any responsibility, are unfortunately obstacles to any real work being done with dispatch, and render it necessary that constant pressure should be applied.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

April 17, 1896.

No. 47.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 308.)

My Lord, *Pera, April* 21, 1896.

ON the 21st ultimo a Commission was dispatched from Diarbekir to the villages of that district to recover Chistian women and girls who had been abducted.

On the 3rd instant, Mr. Hallward addressed to me a telegram, paraphase of which I now have the honour to inclose, stating that out of the large number of women and children in the hands of the Kurds, the Commission had succeeded in recovering only four.

I instructed Mr. Block to bring this telegram of Mr. Hallward's to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and to remind his Excellency that I had both the Sultan's word and his own declaration that no decision confirming the conversions should be arrived at until a means of restoring confidence had been found; but the Vali of Diarbekir seemed to consider himself authorized to disregard the orders of both the Palace and the Porte.

Mr. Block further pointed out the absurdity of sending an incompetent Commission, which out of more than 100 abducted women and children had only brought back four.

Tewfik Pasha accordingly sent a telegram to the Vali of Diarbekir asking for an explanation of Mr. Hallward's statements, and I now have the honour to transmit herewith a précis of a telegram received at the Porte in reply, alleging that the conversions are in all cases voluntary, and that force cannot be used to induce the converts to return to Christianity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 47.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Diarbekir, April* 3, 1896.

THE Commission, which left on the 21st ultimo with the object of recovering abducted women and children in the villages in this district, has returned here bringing with them only one woman, one small girl, and two boys, of whom the woman and girl declared themselves Mussulman and the boys Christian.

This leaves more than 100 in the hands of the Kurds in this district.

Inclosure 2 in No. 47.

Précis of Telegram received from the Vali of Diarbekir.

IN reply to inquiries from the Grand Vizier, the Vali of Diarbekir has replied that all possible efforts had been made to restore to their homes or spiritual authorities women who had been dispersed in various places during the disturbances. Many of these, however, persist in remaining Mussulmans, and refuse to return to the Christian faith. They have not yet been officially recognized as Mussulmans, but cannot be compelled by force to return to their former religion. Thus, recently, when the Syrian Catholic Bishop and the Armenian Metropolitan happened to be at the konak, a number of such women were called up and unofficially interrogated in the presence of the two priests. In spite of all promises and assurances, they persisted in their desire to remain Mussulmans, and the Bishop and Metropolitan were satisfied that this was the case. With regard to one of them, a Syrian Catholic girl of 12 or 13 years of age, the Bishop requested that her statements should not be taken into account, but she proved that she had obtained puberty, and definitely declined to go to the church. The Vali explained to the Bishop that there was no desire to make Mussulmans of such persons, and that no official recognition having taken place, they could at any time return to their original faith, but at present it was impossible to force them to do so when they freely and publicly refused to do so, especially at times like these, when the excitement had so lately subsided. No other warning was given to the Bishop. While recognizing the impossibility of compelling these new converts to return to their Church by main force, the Vali assures the Grand Vizier that his Highness' orders will be carried out, and everything done to please both the ecclesiastical and the Consular authorities.

No. 48.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 311.)
My Lord, *Pera, April* 21, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith translation of an article in the "Tarik" announcing the discovery of an alleged Armenian Revolutionary Association.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Extract from the "Tarik" of April 17, 1896.

(Translation.)

AN official "Communiqué" states that the police have discovered an Armenian Committee, whose chief object was to obtain money from respectable Armenians by sending them threatening letters. Seven persons have been arrested and confessed their crime, acknowledging that the revolutionary seal which they affixed to their letters had been engraved for them by a foreign subject named Kolouch, of Koule Kapou, who has also been arrested. These individuals will be tried and duly sentenced in accordance with law.

No. 49.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 313.)
My Lord, *Pera, April* 21, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy, which I have received from the Russian Ambassador, of a Report by the Russian Consul at Aleppo on the recent incidents at Zeitoun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 49.

The Russian Consul at Aleppo to M. de Nélidow.

Le 26 *Février*, 1896.

CONFORMÉMENT aux ordres de votre Excellence je suis parti d'Alep pour Marache le 3 Janvier dernier avec les Consuls d'Angleterre et d'Italie et le Secrétaire du Consulat de France.

La veille de mon départ j'ai reçu, en ma qualité de doyen du Corps Consulaire, une lettre du Consul d'Allemagne qui m'informait qu'à la suite d'une entente entre les Ambassadeurs d'Italie et d'Allemagne à Constantinople, il nommait le Consul d'Italie son délégué dans la Commission Consulaire à Marache. Le Consul d'Autriche-Hongrie m'avait en même temps déclaré que l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche-Hongrie à Constantinople lui avait télégraphié de ne pas s'exposer à ce pénible voyage et de charger de ses pouvoirs le même Consul d'Italie.

L'Ambassadeur d'Autriche avait certainement des raisons suffisantes pour mettre en avant les difficultés du trajet d'Alep à Marache en supposant que Marache serait le but du voyage de son Consul. Mais les difficultés du voyage de Marache à Zéïtoun se sont trouvées être infiniment plus considérables encore.

Strictement parlant ce n'est qu'en été qu'il existe une route entre Alep et Marache c'est-à-dire, alors qu'on peut non pas suivre un chemin, mais seulement aller dans la direction d'un endroit à un autre, ce que font en général les caravanes et même les voitures,

mais ces dernières jusqu'à Aintab seulement et cela avec beaucoup de difficultés et de retards.

En hiver et surtout au mois de Janvier la route d'Alep à Marache n'est qu'un marais continu à peine praticable et il est nécessaire d'avoir des guides expérimentés pour arriver à Marache sain et sauf. Il faut ajouter que l'hiver dernier avait été exceptionnellement froid, pluvieux, et neigeux non seulement à Marache et à Aintab mais même à Alep.

Le 14 Janvier je suis parti avec tous mes collègues de Marache pour Zéïtoun où je suis arrivé le 16 mais avec mon collègue Anglais seul. Le Consul d'Italie et le Secrétaire du Consulat de France ne sont même pas arrivés à la première station et sont tous les deux retournés à Marache. Le premier m'a informé par une lettre " qu'il ne pouvait arriver à Zéïtoun ni en Tahtarvan, ni à cheval, ni à pied et qu'il avait l'intention de demander à l'Ambassade d'Italie à Constantinople la permission d'exercer à Marache et non pas à Zéïtoun la médiation entre les Plénipotentiaires Turcs et les Zéïtounlis."

Je ne sais pas précisément ce qui a amené le Consul d'Italie à modifier la décision qu'il avait prise mais il arriva trois jours après à Zéïtoun ou plutôt il y fut apporté par quarante porteurs dans un appareil fait exprès pour lui à Marache et qu'on appelle " sedia."

Les deux côtés du sentier montagneux allant dans les neiges de Marache à Zéïtoun étaient jonchés de cadavres gelés de mulets et de chevaux, car pendant deux mois on amenait nuit et jour de Marache des vivres pour les troupes envoyées contre Zéïtoun. Mais sur la route du camp Turc à la ville de Zéïtoun s'offrait un spectacle plus pénible et plus révoltant ; là gisaient des cadavres de Chrétiens pour la plupart dénudés qui furent d'ailleurs bientôt ensevelis grâce à l'autorisation donnée aux Zéïtounlis par le Commandant des troupes. Avec un froid de 18 degrés il y eut un ouragan terrible qui renversait même les chevaux. On racontait que ce jour même un gendarme avec son cheval fut jeté par l'ouragan dans un précipice.

Des pourparlers furent immédiatement entamés avec les chefs de la communauté Arménienne de Zéïtoun. Votre Excellence a eu connaissance en son temps du cours successif de ces pourparlers et de leur résultat final par les télégrammes collectifs expédiés aux Ambassades à Constantinople.

Il est inutile d'exposer que les exigences et les prétentions formulées d'abord par les Zéïtounlis étaient exorbitantes comme étendue et comme quantité et ne s'accordaient nullement avec les instructions dont nous étions munies. Il a fallu de grands efforts pour convaincre les Arméniens et leur expliquer que nous n'étions pas envoyés pour décider la question Arménienne ni dans le fond ni dans la forme ; que le but de notre mission n'était pas politique mais purement humanitaire. Enfin les conditions proposées de leur soumission au Gouvernement Turc et que votre Excellence connaît, furent acceptées et signées par les chefs de la communauté de Zéïtoun et par le " Baron-Agassi " lui-même.

Cet Agassi est un Arménien blond d'un extérieur assez sympathique, âgé de 25 ans, juvénilement jusqu'à l'enthousiasme, dévoué à l'idée Arménienne, membre du Comité Arménien Huntchakiste de Londres, brave, excellent tireur, qui a su inspirer de la confiance aux Zéïtounlis comme patriote prêt à mourir pour la patrie. Il a été en Europe et il peut parler et écrire le Français et le Turc.

Son extérieur et son âge n'ont pas justifié les suppositions des officiers Turcs et d'Edhem Pacha lui-même, qui se le représentaient comme un homme d'un certain âge, d'une taille immense, avec une grande moustache et un regard terrible. Cette dernière particularité supposée a, d'ailleurs, quelque fondement. Le regard d'Agassi, ordinairement plutôt doux, devient, non pas terrible, mais ouvertement méprisant, dès qu'il rencontre le regard d'un officier Turc quelconque.

Les auxiliaires dans la lutte avec les Turcs ont été deux Arméniens de 24 ans qui parlent l'Anglais et qui ont probablement été en Angleterre ou en Amérique. Son troisième compagnon fut tué à l'attaque de Firniz par les Turcs. A ce qu'il dit, la mort de ce Huntchakiste a considérablement facilité aux troupes la prise de Firniz, car les combattants restés sans chef, se réfugièrent à Zéïtoun.

A la suite de l'acceptation des conditions de la Porte par les Zéïtounlis, le " Baron-Agassi " avec ses deux auxiliaires, un Arménien de Smyrne et un Arménien d'Alep, furent expédiés à Mersine sous l'escorte de trente soldats et du Youzbachi Mehmed Bey pour être embarqués sur le premier bateau se rendant en Europe. Ils durent partir de Zéïtoun pour l'exil accompagnés du Drogman et du cavass du Consulat d'Angleterre à Alep. Le Consul d'Italie avait aussi envoyé son cavass.

A mon arrivée à Zéïtoun quatre jours avant mon collègue Français, le Supérieur du Couvent Catholique détruit de Yenidje-Kali s'est adressé à moi en me priant de lui obtenir du Commandant des troupes la permission de se rendre à Marache. Il déclara, qu'après avoir vu un des prêtres assassiné par des soldats envoyés pour protéger le couvent, il s'était réfugié avec un autre prêtre, un novice, et le maître d'école dans les montagnes où

ils se cachèrent tous pendant trois jours. Chassés par la faim ils atteignèrent Zéïtoun où ils furent reçus ainsi que d'autres Chrétiens qui cherchaient un refuge contre les persécutions des Musulmans. Edhem Pacha leur fournit immédiatement des chevaux, des vivres, et quelques habits et ils furent tous expédiés sous escorte dans le Couvent Catholique de Marache, où ils arrivèrent heureusement deux jours après. Ils étaient tous de nationalité Espagnole.

L'insurrection à Zéïtoun commença le 17 Octobre de l'année dernière, quatre jours après les premiers désordres de Marache. Les Arméniens de Zéïtoun n'admettent même pas l'idée de leur résistance au Gouvernement Turc. Ils invoquent le danger qui les menaçait de la part de la population Musulmane qui massacrait les Chrétiens dans le Sandjak de Marache. C'est ce danger qui les a obligés à se défendre, les armes à la main, contre les troupes qui sont venues à Zéïtoun avec une foule de Kurdes et de Circassiens et un ramassis de chercheurs d'occasions favorables pour le vol et le pillage. On estime à 30,000 le nombre des Bachi-Bouzouks qui se trouvaient dans le camp Turc et qui n'en furent chassés que peu de temps avant l'arrivée d'Alep des Consuls.

Les Zéïtounlis attaquèrent tout d'abord les casernes qui se trouvaient sur une élévation à 5 kilom. de la ville. La garnison assiégée, forte de 330 hommes, après trois jours de résistance, se rendit aux Zéïtounlis, avec le Lieutenant-Colonel, les officiers, et le Caïmacam. A la levée du siège de Zéïtoun il ne revint au camp Turc que cinquante-sept soldats prisonniers, le Lieutenant-Colonel, le Youz-Bachi, le Mulazim, et le Caïmacam lui-même, administrateur modèle, un monstre au physique et un idiot au moral. Les autres prisonniers de guerre ont, paraît-il, été assassinés par 600 femmes et les fuyards. Pendant l'absence des Zéïtounlis qui se battaient hors de la ville avec les troupes, les prisonniers ont mis le feu aux maisons, à la suite de quoi, au dire des Arméniens de Zéïtoun, ils furent massacrés.

A la réception à Alep de la nouvelle de l'insurrection à Zéïtoun, on convoqua immédiatement onze bataillons de Rédifs et on les expédia avec dix canons de montagne, sous les ordres de Moustapha Ramzi Pacha, à Marache. En même temps Ali Nouhsin Bey, Colonel des Rédifs à Adana, reçut l'ordre de Constantinople de convoquer les Rédifs-Moukadam du Vilayet d'Adana et de se diriger immédiatement vers Zéïtoun. Cinq jours après un régiment de Rédifs fut concentré à Missis, mais on ne trouva qu'un millier de fusils dans les magasins de réserve. Ali Bey ayant demandé qu'on lui envoie des fusils, le Ministère de la Guerre lui répondit en lui ordonnant de se porter en avant vers Zéïtoun et en lui promettant d'y envoyer les armes qui faisaient défaut.

S'étant mis en marche par la voie de Kars-Bazar, Ali Bey recruta près de 5,000 volontaires, ou, d'après sa propre expression plus exacte, de Bachi-Bouzouks, parmi les Circassiens Tedjeris et Kara-Souyoulis, et arriva par les défilés d'Ouzoun-Yaïla et de Guelinedéré, sur le plateau de Firniz, à trois heures de Zéïtoun, où il attendit pendant douze jours l'envoi de fusils de Bolanik et de Marache. Après onze jours de résistance, il put s'emparer de Firniz avec l'aide de deux bataillons envoyés de Lattaquié et d'une quantité de Bachi-Bouzouks. Il prétend n'y avoir fait prisonniers que 422 habitants qu'il expédia alors même à Marache.

Mais, d'après les renseignements recueillis par moi, dix-huit villages ont été détruits dans le Caza de Firniz, 516 maisons ont été incendiées, et près de 4,000 Chrétiens désarmés, hommes et femmes, ont été massacrés de sang-froid ; 200 Arméniens seulement ont trouvé un refuge à Zéïtoun. D'après le témoignage du Supérieur du Couvent Catholique de Yenidje-Kalé, les soldats et les Bachi-Bouzouks ont commis sur les femmes et les enfants des cruautés et des violences "indescriptibles," "inexprimables," et même "improférables." Les Bachi-Bouzouks ont emmené avec eux plus de 1,000 beaux garçons et filles. L'église Arménienne fut brûlée par les Musulmans avec les Chrétiens qui s'y étaient enfermés. Voilà pourquoi les Chefs de la communauté de Zéïtoun ont exigé de la Porte la punition exemplaire du Colonel Ali Bey. Au lieu d'une punition exemplaire, le Gouvernement Turc l'a récompensé par le grade du Général de Brigade.

De Firniz, Ali Bey se dirigea vers Zéïtoun pour se joindre aux bataillons commandés par Moustapha Ramzi Pacha, lequel, quoique ayant réussi à repousser les Zéïtounlis jusqu'à la ville, avait perdu plus de 550 soldats et près de 10,000 Bachi-Bouzouks, qu'on met toujours en première ligne.

Le Ministère de la Guerre, mécontent de la manière d'agir lente et inefficace de Moustapha Pacha, s'empressa de le remplacer par le Férik du Nizam d'Alep, Edhem Pacha, qui reçut l'ordre de se rendre immédiatement à Zéïtoun pour prendre le commandement de toutes les troupes qui s'y trouvaient campées.

Le 22 Décembre dernier, Edhem Pacha reçut du Sultan l'ordre d'anéantir Zéïtoun dans les vingt-quatre heures, n'importe au prix de quelles pertes et de quels sacrifices, les Puissances étrangères ayant l'intention d'intervenir dans cette affaire.

La nuit même on fit des préparatifs pour prendre la ville d'assaut le lendemain matin, mais à l'étonnement général, on reçut, à 2 heures et demie de la nuit, un contre-ordre de la Porte de suspendre les hostilités contre la ville assiégée, et d'attendre l'arrivée des Consuls de Russie et d'Angleterre, désignés comme médiateurs pour les négociations entre les Zéïtounlis et les Plénipotentiaires du Gouvernement Ottoman.

Avant l'insurrection, le Caza de Zéïtoun se composait, d'après les statistiques Turques, de vingt-deux villages; on y comptait 17,031 habitants, 9,353 hommes et 7,678 femmes: 8,483 Arméniens Grégoriens, 489 Arméniens Catholiques, 238 Protestants, et 7,777 Musulmans. Le chiffre indiqué ne peut pas être estimé tout à fait correct; il est plus considérable en réalité; ce qui n'a pas, d'ailleurs, de grande importance dans le cas présent. Si l'on déduit du chiffre total 150 Zéïtounlis tués dans les rencontres avec les troupes, 800 morts de blessures et de maladies, et jusqu'à 4,662 massacrés par les soldats et les Bachi-Bouzouks, la population Chrétienne du Caza de Zéïtoun se trouve diminuée de deux tiers après l'insurrection.

L'insurrection de Zéïtoun a duré soixante-six jours. Il n'y eut sous les armes que 2,000 hommes, qui tiraient toujours de derrière des rochers ou des embuscades. Les vivres ne manquaient pas, car on avait fait de grands approvisionnements de blé de Firniz, mais les munitions se sont trouvées être insuffisantes; on se procurait de la poudre des bombes qui n'avaient pas éclaté.

D'après les calculs des mathématiciens Zéïtounlis, on aurait lancé ni plus ni moins que 3,000 bombes, dont 200 seulement ont éclaté, car c'étaient des bombes à capsules, et les casernes et les maisons où se défendaient les insurgés n'étaient pas en pierre, mais en terre glaise non cuite.

A part les fusils Martini enlevés à la garnison qui s'était rendue, il n'y avait que six carabines apportées d'Angleterre; la plupart des Zéïtounlis étaient armés de simples fusils de chasse.

Après la pacification, 150 fusils seulement furent remis comme armes de guerre par les chefs Zéïtounlis à Edhem Pacha.

Il y eut jusqu'à 16,000 Chrétiens qui cherchèrent un refuge dans la ville; plus de 4,000 d'entre eux périrent de froid et de maladies dans les conditions hygiéniques les plus défavorables, Zéïtoun ayant toujours été considérée comme la plus saine des sales villes de la Turquie même avec sa population ordinaire, sans compter les 16,000 Chrétiens venus du dehors.

Pour ce qui est des seize bataillons disposés autour de Zéïtoun. C'est à peine s'ils n'étaient pas dans un état encore plus pénible et plus désastreux. Le camp des Rédifs, expédiés sans vêtements chauds et sans bonnes chaussures, ayant fait le parcours d'Alep ou d'Adana à Zéïtoun jusqu'aux genoux dans la boue ou dans la neige avec un froid de 10 degrés en moyenne et obligés de demeurer d'abord sans tentes du tout et ensuite dans de mauvaises tentes sans une quantité suffisante de chauffage; ce camp, composé d'officiers et de soldats noircis par le froid et couverts de suie, ressemblait plutôt à un campement de Bohémiens comme on en voit souvent en Turquie, qu'à un bivouac de troupes qui se trouvaient chez soi, n'étant même pas sorties du vilayet.

On sait que les bataillons des Rédifs n'ont pas tous le même nombre d'hommes; il y a des bataillons de 1,200 soldats, mais il y en a aussi qui n'en ont même pas 700. Il n'y avait pas d'hôpital au camp; les malades étaient expédiés à Marache où l'on avait installé un hôpital pour 300 hommes. Au dire du Médecin-en-chef de l'Hôpital de Marache, on amenait tous les jours de Zéïtoun jusqu'à trente malades, pour la plupart avec les mains ou les pieds gelés; 1,789 sont morts de blessures et de maladies.

Si l'on ajoute encore 4,100 hommes tués dans différents combats d'après l'affirmation des Zéïtounlis et près de 300 déserteurs, le chiffre de 16,000 hommes expédiés au début de l'insurrection se trouvera diminué de la moitié au moins.

Dans ces circonstances, si pénibles et si défavorables sous tous les rapports, l'annonce de la suspension des hostilités d'abord, et l'acceptation par les chefs de l'insurrection des conditions de leur soumission au Gouvernement Turc ensuite, ont été reçus avec une égale joie par les assiégés aussi bien que par les assiégeants, par les Arméniens de Zéïtoun et par les Chrétiens qui y avaient cherché refuge, par les soldats et les officiers sans excepter le Commandant-en-chef lui-même, qui fut récompensé par le grade de Muchir.

No. 50.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 315.)

My Lord, *Pera, April* 21, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, owing to the strong representations of the French Embassy, the Porte has sent a Commission to Yenidje Kalé to inquire into the murder of Père Salvatore, Superior of the monastic establishments at Yenidje Kalé; the circumstances of the outrage are described in Mr. Barnham's despatch No. 3, which formed the inclosure in my despatch to your Lordship No. 81 of the 1st February, and this account is corroborated by a report received from the French Consular Agent now in Zeitoun.

M. de Vialar, the Military Attaché to the French Embassy, accompanied the Commission, which is composed of two military men and two judicial functionaries, none of whom are men of any standing.

The Italian Consul at Aleppo will also join the Commission, and an official from the French Consulate in that town, M. de Vialar, and the Turkish functionaries have already left Alexandretta for Marash.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 51.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 316.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 22, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Erzeroum reporting a recrudescence of Kurdish lawlessness round Moush.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 51.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April* 7, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, confirming his telegram to your Excellency on the recrudescence of Kurdish lawlessness.

With reference to the Chabakchour incident, I beg to state that the Kaïmakam of that place was suspended from office immediately after the occurrence, and an inquiry into his conduct is being held.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 51.

Vice-Consul Humpson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Sir, *Moush, March* 23, 1896.

I REGRET to report that the Kurds are giving trouble in various directions. In the Talori district, the Kurds of Sasoun have entirely pillaged the village of Spagank, carrying off all the tools, clothes, &c., which had been provided from relief funds. They also attacked a party of thirteen Armenians from Talori who had been to the Psank district to buy grain with relief money, and robbed them of all they had. They threaten to pillage other villages, Hitenk, Agpik, &c.

In Bulanik a few nights ago, Kurds entered an Armenian house in the village of Hosh-geldy and killed two men and two women; and both in that district and in Malasgird they are robbing, carrying off girls, &c.

I have brought these matters to the notice of the Mutessarif.

With reference to my despatch of the 2nd March, I have obtained by special messenger details of the affair in Chabakchour which confirms the information given in that despatch, the number of victims being, however, only twelve in all.

I had the honour to telegraph as above to Her Majesty's Embassy to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 52.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 317.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting a raid by Kurds on some villages near there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Vice-Consul Williams to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Van, April 1, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that three villages, about four hours from here, were attacked by Kurds of the Shemsiki Sept during Sunday and Monday. Twenty-five men were killed and some wounded. Last night it was reported that another village had been raided, but no reliable details are yet to hand.

Immediately on the news being received a force of police was sent out. Yesterday I went to see General Saad-ed-Din Pasha, the Inspector of Reforms, and pointed out to him that among the killed were five men who had returned to their village on his assurance of safety given in the Consulate. He was, as always, most friendly, and said that he was their guarantee, and that he was starting in the morning to deal with the Kurds. He has now left with one battalion and a squadron of cavalry.

I have for some time been occupied, in conjunction with the Government, with the question of returning as many of the villagers as possible to their homes, and a large number have been sent back.

Saad-ed-Din Pasha saw a number of representatives from the more doubtful villages with me. He told those he advised to return, that if the Kurds did anything he would go himself; and it is most satisfactory to find that he is a man of his word. I may add that the Armenian Bishop came to thank me for my efforts to induce the people to return to their homes.

It is no easy task for the responsible officials to restore order to this district, but I hope and believe that we are now in a fair way to a better state of things.

The Pasha's action in going out himself will have the best effect on the Kurds. It has already had the result of restoring confidence in the city.

May I venture to hope that your Excellency will bring to the notice of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan the services of Nazim Pasha, the Vali here. He saved the town in November, and has been unceasing in his efforts for the welfare of the Christian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 53.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 318.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Angora, reporting on a case of burglary there, for which five Armenians, one named Artin Emmi, and a Turk are under arrest. The local authorities are now trying to give a political complexion to the crime.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Acting Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, April 13, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency on an incident which occurred here about a month ago, of which however the circumstances appeared at the time to be of such an ordinary everyday character that I did not consider that they merited any special official mention. Lately, however, there would appear to be every probability of a gross miscarriage of justice in connection with this case, so that I deem it to be my duty to bring the matter to your Excellency's notice.

On the morning of the 15th ultimo, being the 1st day of Baïram, an Armenian of the name of Toros Sinarian, who was employed as night watchman in a warehouse belonging to an Armenian merchant of this town, was found lying dead by the side of the safe, to force open which it was very evident that the most strenuous efforts had been made, though in vain. It appeared to be an ordinary case of burglary, with the not uncommon result that the man whose duty it was to look after the premises was killed while attempting to defend his master's property against the burglars. Suspicion fell upon an Armenian named Artin Emmi, on the grounds that he had been the last person seen to enter the warehouse; that some blood stains were found on his trousers; and that a dagger was discovered by the police under his bed, on which, it is alleged, a few small specks of blood are still distinctly visible, although the weapon had evidently been recently cleaned by means of paraffin oil. There can be no doubt that the accused, who is an old man of an inoffensive disposition and bearing a good character, was an intimate friend of the murdered man, so that, unless on the supposition that he was tempted to commit the crime for the sake of the considerable sum which he knew the safe contained, he was a most unlikely person to engage in so criminal an enterprise. The authorities being of opinion, in which they appear to be right, that the damage done to the safe indicates the co-operation of several persons in the attempt to force it open, have made five other arrests, four of the prisoners being Armenians while the fifth is a Turk. At first, the judicial authorities treated the case as an ordinary one of attempted burglary accompanied by murder, in which four or more persons took part, of whom only one, as it so happened, was a Turk. But for the last fortnight and more a report has been gaining ground to the effect that most compromising papers have been found in the possession of some of the persons arrested, from which it is argued that an intention exists to give a political complexion to the matter. The official view of the case would appear to be somewhat as follows:

Artin Emmi and his Christian fellow-prisoners are employed by Central Committeemen (Hintchagists?) living in Constantinople to collect and forward funds to the capital by any and every means in their power. These men knowing of the existence of a very considerable sum of money in the safe in Caraman's Khan, as the warehouse in question is called, try to induce the deceased to connive at the robbery of his employer's property. On his persistent refusal to betray his charge the watchman is killed, and a determined effort is made to break open the safe, which results however in failure.

The argument is ingenious, and were the characters of the accused entirely different to what they are known to be, something might be said in its favour. I am assured, however, that the majority of the people here simply ridicule this view of the matter, the general opinion being that the judicial authorities, while trying to make political capital

out of the matter, are wilfully blinding themselves to other evidence which points in an entirely different direction. How far this is true I am not in a position to say, but what is undeniable is, that it is unfair to the accused to keep them week after week in prison without putting them on their trial, more especially as they are confined in the criminal side of the gaol, where they are forced to associate with some 300 murderers and felons, no distinction being made there between the man who is accused of a criminal offence and who has been proved to be guilty of its commission.

I am officially informed that the delay is owing to the fact that the "pièces de conviction," viz., the dagger and the clothes of Emmi Artin have been sent to Constantinople in order that they may be thoroughly examined there by experts, there being a difference of opinion here as to how far these objects can be relied upon to secure a conviction. I have tried to obtain through the Vali the transference of the prisoners from the criminal to the "juvenile offenders'" side of the gaol, but so far unsuccessfully, the official argument being that this would be unlawful, although, at my special request, they were so transferred during the first two days of Easter week as a great favour.

If any influence could be brought to bear in the right quarter at Constantinople which would have the effect of expediting matters here, I am of opinion that the exercise of such pressure would in this instance be perfectly justifiable.

I have, &c.

Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 54.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 319.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 119 of the 31st ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Jeddah, giving details of the Vali's visit of excuse.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 54.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Jeddah, March 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegrams of yesterday and to-day, I have the honour to state that his Excellency the Vali of the Hedjaz, Ahmed Ratib Pasha, arrived here yesterday from Mecca shortly after midday.

This afternoon the Vali called upon me, and stated that he had come to formally express his deep regret for the deplorable outrage committed by Bedouins on the 30th May last, and the ill-success which had attended his earnest endeavours to arrest the perpetrators of the crime. Ratib Pasha, continuing, observed that the measures taken by him for this purpose were known to me; but to this statement I felt compelled to reply that unfortunately, owing to the fact that his Excellency had not thought it expedient to communicate to me the information for which I had on several occasions applied to him, I was not acquainted with the precise nature of the measures which he had adopted. The Vali expressed his regret for his omission which was due in great measure to the peculiar circumstances of the case, but said that he had at least informed me that the Ottoman authorities were taking every possible measure for the arrest of the assassins. He then, at some length, explained the measures adopted, which were the imprisonment of certain Bedouins, which failed in its anticipated effect; the dispatch of police to Wadi Fatma (the original head-quarters of the murderers), who did not find the persons whom they sought; and of Bedouin auxiliaries who declined to face the enemy. He added that the habits of the Bedouins and the rapidity of their movements, of which I must be quite aware, rendered the capture of the assassins most difficult, if not well-nigh impossible.

In conclusion, Ratib Pasha, in the name of his Government, expressed his profound regret that such an incident should have occurred, more especially in the case of Consular officers in the service of Great Britain, which had always maintained friendly relations with the Ottoman Empire.

In reply, I observed that the incident to which his Excellency referred was a crime of a peculiarly brutal and daring character. In the immediate neighbourhood of Jeddah, indeed within full view of the window at which we were sitting, Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Richards, had been wounded, and the much lamented Vice-Consul, Dr. Abdur Razzack, had been murdered in cold blood, and I deeply deplored the fact that up to the present time it had not been found possible to arrest the assassins. In conclusion, I thanked his Excellency warmly for the expressions of regret which he had offered, and informed him that I would not fail to report them to your Excellency.

In the course of our subsequent conversation, I asked the Vali whether he had been able to ascertain the motive of the crime. After some consideration, he replied that it was difficult to say, but that it was probably a mere act of reckless Bedouin fanaticism. Being apparently aware that this explanation would not be considered satisfactory, being entirely at variance with the circumstances and with the opinion entertained by all persons who are in a position to judge, he added that some people thought that the victims of the outrage were mistaken for the Sanitary doctors. On my pointing out that the persons alleged by the authorities to have committed the crime were well acquainted with the town, where they had friends, and that it was perfectly well known to everybody where the doctors always were at the hour when the outrage took place, circumstances which rendered this theory somewhat improbable, his Excellency said that the affair was inexplicable. It will thus be seen that the Vali professes to know no more respecting the causes of the outrage than when he arrived here more than eight months ago.

Ratib Pasha assured me that he would renew and redouble his efforts to arrest the assassins.

I then expressed a hope that the town would not be denuded of troops and Government officials during the coming pilgrimage as was the case last year. The Vali was inclined to contest my statement as to the number of the troops who were here at that time, which, however, is well known to have barely exceeded forty, but he condemned the absence of the Government officials.

The remainder of the Vali's visit, which lasted quite an hour, was devoted to the discussion of some matters which have formed the subject of correspondence between us.

On leaving me his Excellency made visits of shorter duration to the French Consul and the Acting Russian Consul.

I propose to call on the Vali to-morrow morning, as his Excellency's stay here will probably be short

During the Vali's visit Mr. Vice-Consul Mohammed Hussain and Said Effendi Bajseir, the Dragoman of this Consulate, were present.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

No. 55.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 320.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 123 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, giving the Report made by the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Hood" on the state of affairs at Suedia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 55.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, April 7, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 3rd and 5th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that on the return of the "Hood" to Beyrout Captain Drury reported to the Senior Naval Officer that he had communicated off Suedia with Dr. Moore, of the American Mission, who stated that the surrounding country had been quiet until the recent arrival of about 1,500 troops, composed chiefly of reserves, with some Kurds, which aroused the fears of the inhabitants of the few Armenian villages in that district.

He added that there are five Armenian villages in that neighbourhood, four of which, containing about 2,000 inhabitants each, are situated to the north of Mount Casius, within a radius of 6 or 7 miles, while the fifth, with a population of about 3,000, is on the southern slope of that mountain, there being no other Armenian village on that side of Antioch.

Arrangements were made to bring off Dr. Moore and the few other Europeans there in the event of any disturbance taking place.

A rough plan of the district referred to by Captain Drury is inclosed.

The United States' vessel of war "Marblehead" had arrived at Suedia some days before, but left without communicating, and the Turkish "stationnaire" off Alexandretta had anchored off Suedia and landed a few troops who were encamped on the beach.

There was only one British subject at Suedia, and nineteen at Antioch.

I beg to add that Captain Mann had intended to proceed to Cyprus, but his plans have been altered, and the squadron will probably remain at Beyrout until the 12th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 55.

Rough Plan of District about Suedia.

[Not printed.]

No. 56.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 321.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the dismissal of the Mutessarif of Moush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 56.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 8, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush on the subject of the dismissal of the Mutessarif of Moush.

No one here seems to know the real motives of his disgrace, but I hear he is on his way to Constantinople under escort.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 56.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Cumberbatch.

Sir, *Moush, March 28, 1896.*

IT is with great regret that I have to report that the Mutessarif, Féham Pasha, has been dismissed, and ordered to go at once to Constantinople. The intrigues against him, to which I have long called attention, have therefore now succeeded, and an excellent official, who, in the face of great opposition and difficulties, has endeavoured to govern well and fairly in the interests of all the inhabitants, and for the good of the country, is on that account dismissed. That Féham Pasha has saved Moush from any serious outbreak is indubitable, and his dismissal is a direct encouragement to all the worst fanatics and disturbers of the peace among the Mussulmans, the consequences of which will, I fear, soon be evident.

I have no doubt that the Mutessarif's friendly relations with myself are one reason of his disgrace. That is, at least, the common opinion here, and his departure will render my position here not only extremely difficult, but make my presence an actual source of danger.

The news has been received by the Armenians with the utmost consternation, and with deep regret and anxiety by the Mussulmans who desire order and prosperity.

The Military Commander, Rehmi Pasha, has also been transferred in disgrace to Arabia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—I had the honour to telegraph above to Her Majesty's Embassy last night.
C. S. H.

No. 57.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 322.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout reporting the visit of the Governor-General to northern Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 57.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, April 16, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a despatch received from Mr. Vitale, British Vice-Consul at Latakia, relative to the visit of the Governor-General to that town, whence his Excellency proceeded to other points on the northern coast of Syria, viz., Bassit, Kara-Dowran, and Suedia, the last named being the port of the district of Antioch, the scene of the recent panic amongst the inhabitants of the Armenian villages, reported in my despatch of the 7th instant.

I beg to add that his Excellency the Governor-General returned yesterday to Beyrout.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 57.

Vice-Consul Vitale to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

Lattaquié, le 13 Avril, 1896.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le 11 courant est arrivé ici son Excellence le Gouverneur-Général de Beyrouth par le bateau Autrichien.

Arrivé le soir, son Excellence s'est embarqué le lendemain matin de bonne heure sur un petit bateau à vapeur de la Régie qui l'a suivi exprès et il s'est rendu à Bassit d'où il compte se rendre sur le même navire à Kara-Douran (petit port à Kassab-Mont Casin) et à Swedyah, port d'Antioche.

Ces deux derniers ports relèvent du Vilayet d'Alep mais Bassit relève de ce district de Lattaquié.

Je suis informé que de retour à Lattaquié, son Excellence se rendra immédiatement par mer à Gébelé et à Baniass, chef-lieu de deux Caïmacamlics de ces noms relevant du Mutessarifiic de Lattaquié, ensuite à Tortose.

L'on dit que le but de ce voyage de son Excellence est pour faire des réformes administratives et créer deux nouveaux Caïmacamlics, l'un Bassit et l'autre à Tortose.

Son Excellence n'a pas donné le temps pour lui faire des visites et il ne s'est pas fait accompagner du Mutessarif ni de personne de cette ville.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALE.

No. 58.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 323.)

Pera, April 23, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a telegram addressed by the Italian Consul at Marash to his Embassy in this city describing the state of affairs at Marash.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 58.

The Italian Consul at Marash to the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople.

Marache, le 16 Avril, 1896.

(Télégraphique.)

PRISON de Marache regorge d'Arméniens, la plupart innocents, soumis à des tortures corporelles. Il y a beaucoup de malades sans soins dont un ou deux meurent journellement.

Ces prisonniers ont adressé hier au Sultan une Pétition pour obtenir amnistie. Cédant aux prières de leurs familles, qui assiègent ma demeure, je prie votre Excellence d'obtenir que cette Pétition soit appuyée par les Ambassadeurs auprès de Sa Majesté Impériale.

Si le Gouverneur actuel et le Commandant Ziver Pacha ne sont pas éloignés d'ici Marache sera en danger permanent de nouveaux massacres, et les concessions obtenues pour les Zéïtounlis seront violées entièrement.

Les autorités judiciaires n'ont pas été informées de l'amnistie accordée et le Gouverneur continue à faire écrouer arbitrairement des personnes qui y sont comprises.

Edhem n'a pas communiqué aux Zéïtounlis que des exemptions d'impôts étaient accordées.

Les troupes restent à Zéïtoun et dans les environs et ravagent ce qui restent de cultivation.

No. 59.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 325.)

Constantinople, April 23, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Turkish newspapers of the 19th instant announce that an Imperial Iradé has been issued sanctioning the payment to his Excellency Djelal Pasha, ex-Mutessarif of Kerkuk, of a salary of 2,500 piastres monthly while unemployed.

Djelal Pasha was Mutessarif at Moush during the events in Sasoun, but was removed to Kerkuk for having reported that there was no truth in the statements of the Vali that the people round Sasoun were in open revolt, but that they were simply starving and desperate.

He has since been trying to obtain a further transfer with the result that he is now placed "en disponibilité" with the allowance above stated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 60.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 326.)

Constantinople, April 23, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that an Imperial Iradé has been issued for the recall of all Ottoman students abroad. This step appears to be due to the representations of Munir Bey, the Turkish Ambassador in Paris, who has reported that these students are in great poverty, and are thus led to become affiliated to revolutionary Societies.

I have, further, the honour to report that the French Government have at length, in compliance with the repeated request of Munir Bey, prohibited the circulation in France of the "Meshveret," a paper published in Turkish in Paris by Riza Bey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 61.

Consul-General Wood to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 13.)

Tabriz, April 11, 1896.

My Lord,

IN continuation of despatches in which I brought to your Lordship's notice certain reports as to the threatening attitude of the Kurds on the Turco-Persian frontier,* and the arrival of agents of Armenian revolutionary Committees in this province, I have now the honour to transmit the copy of an extract from a private letter which has lately been addressed to a friend by Father Salomon, of the French Roman Catholic Mission in Salmas, confirming the reports which had already reached me as to the uneasy state of affairs obtaining on the frontier.

I know not whether any importance has been attached to these rumours and reports, but I am informed that a couple of field guns and two regiments of infantry have already been sent from Tabriz to the vicinity of Khoi.

The approach or presence of this force does not seem, however, to have made any impression on the preparations which are said to be made by the Kurds for a descent into Persian territory, or to have given the Christian populations in those parts confidence in any aid but their own efforts to withstand or repel attack.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

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* See Consul-General Wood's No. 8 of the 26th February, and No. 9, Secret, of the 16th March, 1896.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Extract from a Letter addressed by Father Salomon, of the French Mission in Salmas, to a Friend in Tabriz.

LES Arméniens de Salmas s'attendent à être visités par les Kurdes et même à être attaqués par les Musulmans du pays. Ils se sont donc préparés—ils ont des armes.

Ces gens ne restent pas sur la défensive pur et simple—ils se permettent des actes agressifs.

Encore des lettres promettant aide aux Arméniens de Van interceptées sur la frontière de Turquie, cachées dans des bâtons creux—un hasard les a découvertes aux Kurdes.

A la suite de cela les Musulmans de Salmas aussi demandent des armes. Une fois le pays armé la vie des Chrétiens est en danger, les Arméniens étant prêts à se défendre, ce sont les Catholiques qui courent le danger.

No. 62.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 119.)
Foreign Office, April 20, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 294 of the 16th instant, reporting the representations made by Mr. Block at the Palace and the Porte, under instructions from your Excellency, with respect to the difficulties raised by the local authorities at Bitlis and Kharput in the distribution of relief, and their apparent disregard of the instructions issued by the Porte on the subject.

Your Excellency's proceedings in this matter have my entire approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY

No. 63.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 142.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 30, 1896, 3 P.M.*

I HEAR from Erzeroum that Shakir Pasha will be accompanied in his approaching tour in the provinces by M. Prjevalski, Secretary to the Russian Consulate at Erzeroum, who was Russian Delegate to the Sasoun Commission.

No. 64.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 329.)
Constantinople, April 25, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice, reporting on the disturbances at Killis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE,

Inclosure in No. 64.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, April 10, 1896.

Sir,

IN conformity with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 21st March, I have inquired, while passing through Killis, into the recent disturbances in that town.

I have little to add to the information furnished by Acting Consul Catoni in his despatch of the 2nd instant, the contents of which I confirm.

The massacre, or partial massacre, at Killis occurred on the 20th and 21st March, or two days after the Baïram festival, and in view of the previous Mussulman threats of attacking the Armenians at that festival, the absence of the Kaïmakam and the Military Captain at that time was an act of negligence of the most culpable kind.

My information is that, inside and outside the town, some seventy-five Armenian males were killed, and forty-five wounded. About thirty others, who are still missing, are generally supposed to have lost their lives. One hundred and fifty out of the three hundred Armenian houses were plundered, together with some seventy shops.

The Killis incident has had a bad effect on the already rudely shaken tranquillity of the district in showing that such occurrences are still possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

No. 65.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 334.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Jeddah, reporting the return of the Vali to Mecca.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 65.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Jeddah, April 2, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that his Excellency the Vali left for Mecca at about 3 A.M. this morning, having spent three and a-half days here.

His return to Mecca was hastened by the mutinous conduct of some Syrian time-expired soldiers, numbering about twenty-five, who during the Vali's absence, entered the Haram or Mosque, containing the Caaba, with their arms, and refused to come out until they received their discharge and the pay due to them.

This is an incident of frequent occurrence in Mecca, but on this occasion it created some alarm among the pilgrims, who were at prayers when the soldiers entered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

No. 66.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 1.)*

(No. 335.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 27, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice reporting on the massacres and forced conversions which have taken place at Birejik, Ourfa, Adiaman, Severek, Behesni, and neighbouring districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* Full text of Inclosures received May 22.

Inclosure 1 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Birejik, March* 5, 1896.

IN pursuance of your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 4th February, received by me at Rhodes, I arrived here by way of Aleppo on Thursday, the 25th ultimo, having been preceded by some eight days by my Turkish colleagues, Ali Riza Effendi, Accountant of the Aleppo Evcaf Department, and Mustapha Nedim Effendi, President of the Civil Court of Aleppo.

On my remarking at Aleppo that their preceding me might be open to misconstruction, I was officially informed by the Aleppo authorities that they were under the impression I had already proceeded to Birejik, but there was no satisfactory reply to my answer that my whereabouts might have been easily ascertained from Her Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo. My colleagues had been already in communication with the new converts to Islamism before my arrival.

Altogether apart from their personal character, I should remark that an official of a Mussulman religious institution like the Evcaf Department is hardly the proper functionary to investigate such a delicate matter as that which formed the subject of our inquiry here.

Your Excellency will better understand the causes of the acceptance of Islamism by the Christians of Birejik by a brief narrative of the events which led up to it.

Living among the Mussulman population of about 1,400 houses, the small Christian community of 240 houses consisted, with the exception of a few Greek Catholics, of Gregorian, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Armenians, for the most part poor and hard-working, and living peaceably among the Mussulman majority.

By the acknowledgment of the authorities here they had, with the exception of one or two so-called seditious documents found among them, no connection with political agitation.

About the beginning of November 1895, the anti-Christian feeling, which was so pronounced in some portions of this vilayet, spread to Birejik, and the Christians began to be insulted and threatened. This feeling reached such a height, that during November and December they were obliged to remain shut up in their houses, only occasionally venturing down into the town in disguise when absolutely necessary. They tried to make known their situation in Aleppo and Constantinople, but they maintain the postal authorities examined and tore up their telegrams and letters.

During these two months, though several attempts were made to assail the Christian quarter, the authorities and military, urged by some of the well-disposed Moslems, warded off the attacks.

About the beginning of December, a battalion of Roumkalé reserves, under the command of Tahsin Bey, Major of Sourrouj, arrived in the town, and towards the end of the same month the Kaïmakam, at the instance of the Mussulman inhabitants, called on the Christians to deliver up their arms, declaring that otherwise he could not protect them. They thereupon sent down to the Government house all the arms they possessed, consisting chiefly of the old pattern pistols, daggers, &c., to be found in most Oriental houses in the interior of this country.

At this period, the last few days of December, during the massacres at Jibin and Ourfa, the Mussulmans of Birejik became fiercely excited, and besieged the Government house, openly reproaching the Kaïmakam with being an "uncircumcized infidel," with protecting the Christians and concealing the Sultan's orders for their extermination, crying, "Our Padishah has ordered that the Armenians be massacred, and that no Christians are to be left in the country." The same spirit communicated itself to the reserves.

The preceding statements I hold more from Mussulman than Christian sources, and am convinced of their authenticity.

Finally, on the 1st January, 1896 (N. S.), at about 9 A.M., a general attack was made on the Christian quarter. The assailants, armed with fire-arms, axes, hatchets, and similar weapons, were divided into three parties, one to break in the doors and walls, the second to plunder, and the third to massacre all males above a certain age. On effecting an entrance, they induced the Christians to deliver up their money, trinkets, and other valuables on the promise of sparing their lives, and then handed them over to the mob.

I need not dilate upon the details of the massacre, suffice it to say that every house

in the Christian quarter was pillaged, the mob in their frenzy burning and destroying what they could not carry off, the ruin and desecration of the Gregorian, Catholic, and Protestant churches being carried out with special thoroughness. The carnage lasted till close on sunset, by which time over 150 Christians (I have in my possession a carefully checked list of their names) were massacred and over sixty wounded.

Your Excellency will naturally wonder what the authorities and military were doing during these eight or nine hours of slaughter. The Major of Reserves, whether he, too, believed that Government wished the extermination of the Christians, or whether the work of massacre was after his own heart, absolutely refused to move his men, or allow them to be moved to stay the destruction of life and property. Nejib Effendi, a well-disposed Mussulman Notable of Birejik, begged him with tears in his eyes to give him a few soldiers to go up and save what he could. This the Major also refused.

Towards evening, when the mob had finished their work in the Christian quarter, they descended in search of those who had escaped. These latter were crowded together in the houses of one or two friendly Mussulmans, notably a certain Hadji Zacheria Agha. Covered with blood and with loud cries of extermination to the infidels, they several times assaulted these houses, but were beaten off by the Mussulman owners and their men. Seeing, however, their desperate determination to break in and exterminate the Christians, an Armenian woman ascended the roof, and with a white flag declared that they had all become Mussulmans. The remaining Armenians thereupon repeated the formula of Moslem creed, and Hadji Zacheria Agha induced the mob to retire, saying that they were now attacking their fellow Mussulmans. They then withdrew and proceeded during the night to remove some of the traces of their bloody work by dragging the dead bodies with ropes down to the water's edge and throwing them into the Euphrates.

Two Greek Catholics, who had been secreted in Mussulman houses, together with one or two Jews, fled the town during the night, the name of Christian and Armenian being thus completely wiped out in Birejik, as it has been in the neighbouring district.

It will naturally occur to your Excellency that such being the facts attending the conversion to Islamism of the Birejik Armenians, there was very small necessity or margin for making an inquiry into the sincerity of their new belief and the conscientious grounds which led to their adoption of the dominant faith.

I would beg here to point out, and it is a distinction upon which the Turkish authorities may lay great stress, that the Moslems did not with axes in their hands invite the Christians to choose between the alternatives of Islam or death. They simply showed and proved their determined resolve to massacre all Christians, and the latter, to save their lives, accepted Islamism. It is the subtle logical distinction between objective and subjective. The alternatives offered by the Mussulmans were not Islam or death, whereas the only alternatives left to the Christians were those of death or Islam. So that the Armenians, to save themselves from certain death, became Mussulmans of their own free will, if, indeed, people under such terrible circumstances can in any way be considered as free agents or as possessing a free will.

I should add that even their adoption of Islam would not have availed them without the exertions of their few Mussulman friends, and many individuals during the massacre were cut down while in the act of pronouncing the Mussulman formula of faith.

The official account of the massacre was that in a quarrel between Mussulmans and Christians, five of the former and twenty of the latter lost their lives, the facts as regards the Mussulman loss of life being that one Mussulman was wounded in a brawl over the plunder.

Some individual soldiers seem to have participated in the massacre, and the Government immediately afterwards adopted the peculiar measure of sending the Roumkalé Reserves at Birejik to Aintab, replacing them by the Aintab battalion, who had been in Aintab during the disorders in that town.

The new converts to Islam, their former houses being ruined, were packed together in two khans, where they lay for some days, huddling together with insufficient clothing to protect them against the winter's cold, and a wretched pittance of bread and water received from the authorities and some Mussulman houses. No serious endeavour has as yet been made by the authorities to restore the stolen property.

As the legal formalities necessary on conversion to Islam had not yet been performed, the Government refused to recognize them as such before demanding instructions from Aleppo; and, as the population were still menacing in their attitude,

and reproached them with insincerity in their newly-adopted faith, to prove their sincerity, in the face of threats, the Armenians proceeded to convert their church into a mosque, which they called the "Hamidieh Mosque," after His Imperial Majesty the Sultan; some of them took a second wife, went through the rite of circumcision, and the leading men of the three communities telegraphed the news of their conversion to His Imperial Majesty, to whose generosity they appealed in their state of destitution. They received, in reply, 160 Turkish liras, which was quickly spent. The extent of their losses on the day of the massacre was £ T. 10,000.

They now all wear turbans, and are apparently most zealous in their attendance at mosque and in the other observances of their newly-adopted religion.

The foregoing are the facts connected with the conversions to Islamism, which my colleagues and myself were instructed to inquire into.

The new converts had been threatened by the Mussulmans, if they did not declare that they had become Moslem of their own free will, the Mussulmans having further avowed that they would never again permit "infidels" to reside in their country. The outburst of fanaticism which had accompanied the massacres had not cooled down, but had, on the other hand, been intensified by the increase of religious fervour, invariably caused by the preaching and rites of Ramazan.

The Turkish Commissioners informed me that their instructions were to inquire, in my presence, into the cause of change of religion by the Armenians, and give the latter the assurances of the Ottoman Government that they would be protected in case they elected to return to their old faith.

I at once perceived that my task was one of no small difficulty, and that it was absolutely impossible for the Armenians to declare their real sentiments openly to the Turkish Commissioners.

I wish, therefore, to draw a careful distinction between my personal inquiry and that conducted in my presence by my Turkish colleagues. The latter at first proposed that we should assemble all the new converts in one place and ask them whether they had embraced Islamism of their own accord, and if they wished to remain Mussulmans. I objected on the ground that, owing to their evident terror and fear of their lives, they could not freely declare their real convictions, and that any statement by them under such conditions would be a committal to a course which they would subsequently be unable to renounce if they should so desire.

We finally agreed to confine our joint inquiry to taking the statements of some prominent Armenians, and, by visiting together the former Christian quarter and questioning the inhabitants, to getting a general idea of their views. We, moreover, conceded to one another the right of conducting a separate and independent inquiry, a right which had been freely indulged in by my colleagues before my arrival.

Annex (A) embodies the partial result of the interrogatory of four Armenian Notables as conducted by my colleagues in my presence, the answers to all the questions put by me not having been recorded. Rather one-sided as it is, owing to the manifest bias of my colleagues in their manner of putting the questions and the nature of those questions, I secured the result with its insertions and additions only after long and animated exchanges of views, during which I intimated the possibility of my breaking off the inquiry, at the same time that I impressed upon them the considerable prejudice which any serious divergence of views would have on the value of such inquiry.

I solemnly impressed upon the four Armenians that they were absolutely in no way bound to sign the document, but my assurances were of little avail in face of their situation and fears, and they professed their readiness to sign.

Annex (B) is the result of our joint visit to the Christian quarter, where the questions put by my colleagues were not of a nature to elicit the confidence and real expression of opinion of the Armenians, who had throughout the servile bearing customary of the "rayah," in the presence of an Ottoman functionary, accentuated by the circumstances of their present deplorable situation.

My colleagues informed me that they did not intend to put in either documents (Annexes A and B) officially, and that they were required solely for their personal justification against possible accusations of Christian sympathies on the part of their fellow-Mussulmans—a confession which detracts considerably from their personal merits and fitness to conduct such a delicate investigation; but, believing that they may use the documents as the basis of their Report, I thought it well to attach translations of both as annexes to my Report for your Excellency's information.

So much for our joint inquiry, which, eminently unsatisfactory as it is from a European standpoint, I yet consider fairly satisfactory in view of the delicate nature of the situation and question, the Armenians in the present instance being still left free to

return to their old faith. The result of my personal inquiry—a summary of which I had the honour to telegraph to your Excellency in my telegrams of the 3rd and 4th March—is as follows:—

The 1,500 Armenians remaining out of the 130 Gregorian, 65 Roman Catholic, and 45 Protestant houses of Birejik, saved their lives on the 1st January (N.S.) by embracing Islamism. They are all Christians at heart, and desirous of making an open profession of their old faith. But they have lost their all, are surrounded by a fiercely fanatical and hostile Moslem population, and have no religious heads, the only Gregorian priest, Ohannes Vartabed, having been killed in the massacre, the Catholic priest having been previously sent to Aleppo, and the Protestant pastor Leon imprisoned at Ourfa. The Protestant preacher is now a Moslem. A declaration of Christianity by them at present would be most dangerous.

Mussulmans in Constantinople, who are not strict observers, and who are far removed from the scene of the present outbreaks, may be inclined to minimize the real significance of the provision of the "Sheri" law, that renegades from Islam are to be put to death (Turkish "murtadin Katli hellal"); but the Mussulmans of these districts, whose religious fervour has reached a white heat, are determined, especially in the face of the feebleness of the local authorities, to carry it out, should any of the converts renounce Islamism, the fact that they have not been officially recognized by Government having no weight with the population.

The case which occurred in the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, as well as that of the Bulgarian girl in 1876 at Salonica, resulting in the massacre of two Consuls, will exemplify the extreme difficulty of the present case.

The whole question as regards the populace turns on this point, and the situation is most serious. It is essential that the legal formalities connected with the official recognition of the recent Armenian converts to Islam should not be carried out for some time until order be completely restored in these regions, if, indeed, such a result can ever again be obtained under the present system. The ordinary machinery of Government is not sufficient for that purpose. The local authorities having, by their criminally slack and dubious behaviour during the recent events, lost all prestige, respect, and authority in the eyes of the Mussulman population, are powerless to cope with the present question in any sense favourable to the Christian population; and, as I had the honour to propose in my telegram of yesterday, the 4th March, the task of restoring order should be intrusted to a High Commission, one or more, according to the extent of the country to be dealt with, composed of high civil and military functionaries, and armed with extraordinary and summary powers, who would, after Bairam, visit the affected districts, and, in the Sultan's name, administer stern justice to the authors of recent outbreaks, after which the question of religious conversions could be attended to. To that end a Patriarchal Delegate might accompany the Commission, as in many places no Armenian clergy remain. The presence of one or more foreign Delegates on such a Commission would be essential to exercise a judicious control, and as a vindication to the sentiment of European public opinion.

As the Tribunals of the Empire are now busy dealing with and punishing cases of Armenian sedition, there could be no reason for a charge of partiality in similarly meting out condign punishment to the Mussulman authors of recent massacres.

Such a course His Imperial Majesty the Sultan owes to the opinion of Europe and his own authority and name, for in several instances his name has been used by unauthorized persons as an incentive to lawlessness. The authority of his functionaries has met with a severe check in these regions, and, if order is not fundamentally restored by some very drastic measures, the result cannot but be disastrous to his Exchequer as well as to the happiness and prosperity of his subjects, especially the remaining Christians, who will be obliged gradually to abandon the interior.

As regards Birejik, unless the fanaticism of the Mussulmans is curbed and mastered by some such stern exhibition of justice and authority, the Christians here cannot possibly openly proclaim their religion, and will be obliged either to remain Mussulman, or to relinquish what property they have saved, and quit the interior one by one for distant sea-coast towns or foreign parts.

The local authorities are both unable and unwilling to deal with the ringleaders of the massacres, many of whom are prominent citizens, and they would, I believe, gladly welcome some such extraordinary measures as I have ventured to propose for the treatment of the question.

With regard to the pitiable condition of Armenians in this town, any description of their sad plight would be merely an echo of the reports of Her Majesty's Consular officers from other districts in Anatolia, where similar events have occurred. Aid from

relief funds should, I think, not be distributed too lavishly at first, as any such relief on a large scale would be a certain inducement to the local authorities to relax or probably abandon their already slack efforts to restore stolen property, the greater portion of which still remains in the plundered districts. It would be advisable at present to dole out what is barely necessary to relieve immediate distress, while trying to induce the authorities to do their duty in effecting the restitution of the stolen goods.

When the Turkish authorities awaken to a sense of duty, and things have righted themselves somewhat, any further relief will be very welcome and sadly needed. But to distribute relief on a large scale under present circumstances would be a temptation to unruly and unpunished marauders to renew their plundering.

I would beg to sum up as follows what I consider the proper course to be pursued with regard to the conversion question:—

1. The new converts should not be recognized officially for a period of some six months.

2. In the meantime the Ottoman Government should vindicate and restore its authority over the Mussulman population by severely punishing the prime movers in the recent massacres, and take the proper measures, such as, for example, replacing the reserves by regular troops, for the protection of any converts who should return to Christianity.

In the event of the Government of the Sultan not taking vigorous measures to punish those guilty of the massacres, then I am of opinion it would be advisable, callous as it may seem, to let things take their course, the result of which would probably be that a portion would escape from their native districts, some would lose their lives for having abjured their new faith, and the remainder perforce remain Mussulman. For any measure, which does not include the severe chastisement of the authors of the massacres, would be absolutely valueless in restoring the confidence of the Christian population, and the latter could never again be secure against the wanton attacks of the Mussulmans, whose fanaticism has lately been stirred to such depths as to amount in these parts to a veritable religious war against the Christians.

This religious war has been completely successful in blotting out the Christian name not only in Birejik, but in the entire surrounding district outside the large towns, like Aintab and Ourfa, where its success though great has not been so complete. The Christians of Sourouj fled to Ourfa, while those of Ehnesh, seventy houses, of Jibin, fifty houses, and Nisib, forty houses, turned Moslem.

I would beg, finally, to record my conviction that, even after the adoption of the drastic measures suggested above, the possibility of the Armenians returning to Christianity is but very problematical.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

P.S.—I calculate at about 2,800 souls the number of Armenian Christians who have turned Moslem in Birejik, Ehnesh, Jibin, and Nisib.

G. H. F.

Annex (A).

(Translation from Turkish original.)

ON the 17th (29th) February, 1311 (1896), Hasher Effendi, formerly Gregorian Armenian, now known as Mehmed Shakir; Sheikh Muslim, former Armenian name Abosh; Howaja Kevork, former Catholic Notable, now known as Mehmed Nouri Effendi; and the Protestant Notable Abraham, now known as Ibraham, all inhabitants of the town of Birejik, having been interrogated in the presence of Mr. Fitzmaurice, declared as follows: That on the day of the massacre, in order to save their lives, they had accepted Islamism; that had they not done so their lives were in peril; that their lives had been spared through their accepting Islamism, and through the exertions of Hadji Zacheria Agha; that, however, nobody had invited them with urgence to embrace Islamism (*vide* N.B.); that, although perfect tranquillity should be restored, or, no matter what place of complete safety they may go to, they would not renounce Islam; that they declared this latter sentiment on their own behalf alone, and that they were unaware whether it was shared by the community at large, or whether the community wished to return to their old faith or not; that the church which they had turned into a mosque had been constructed by the exertions and money of their own community without any help from outside; that they would not allow it to remain a church, and should any of those who had contributed to its construction re-embrace Christianity, they would return them their money and let the church remain as a mosque.

On being asked whether they wished to sign the above statements, they declared their readiness to do so. They added that their families and children participated in these sentiments, and then signed.

N.B.—The real meaning of the above phrase "that although perfect tranquillity should be restored, or, no matter what place of complete safety they may go to," is to be interpreted "that *for the present moment* they have no intention of renouncing Islam."

(Signed) MEHMED SHAKIR.
MEHMED NOURI.
SHEIK MUSLIM.
IBRAHIM.

We declare that the foregoing is the substance and sense of the answers given to the questions put by us, and that in our presence.

(Signed) MOUSTAPHA NEDIM,
President, Bidayet Court.
ALI RIZA,
Accountant, Aleppo Eccaf Department.

Present:
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

February 17 (29), 1896.

N.B.—On the objection raised by Mr. Fitzmaurice that the statement contained in the above document bearing the signatures of the four individuals interrogated, viz.: "That, although perfect tranquillity should be restored, or, no matter what place of complete safety they may go to, they would not renounce Islamism," might be construed into a limitation on the liberty of these persons to change their religion in the future, and might afterwards be an obstacle to their freedom to do so, whereas under the present circumstances it was impossible to predict what might in future be the sentiment of these men, and any such statement must be interpreted as referring only to the present situation; the phrase "that *for the present moment* they have no intention of renouncing Islam" was substituted in the last line of the above document instead of the previous above-mentioned statement. Mr. Fitzmaurice's objection was concurred in by us.

(Signed) ALI RIZA.
MUSTAPHA NEDIM.

February 18 (*March* 1), 1896.

Annex (B).

(Literal translation of copy from Turkish original.)

THE general impression resulting from our personal inquiry pursuant on the declaration of acceptance of Islamism by the Gregorian, Catholic, and Protestant communities of Birejik is as follows:—

All of these Armenians became Mussulmans under the influence of terror on the day of the massacre, and, though they have been assured that they are free to embrace any religion they choose, and that they will be protected by the Imperial Ottoman Government, their real sentiments can probably only be ascertained after the restoration of complete confidence and tranquillity, it being at the present impossible to gauge their future opinions on the subject. For the moment, however, a certain number, to judge by their statements, have no intention of renouncing Islam, and declare that, apart from the fright and terror caused by the massacres, no other violent pressure was brought to bear to force them to adopt Islamism. At the present moment they are in a pitiable state of misery and destitution resulting from the massacre and the plundering by which it was accompanied. It is plain from the expression and manner of a portion of them that they desire to return to their old faith.

This document bearing our signatures and containing the above statements has been exchanged between us.

(A true copy.)

(Signed) ALI RIZA,
Accountant, Aleppo Eccaf Department.
MUSTAPHA NEDIM,
President, Bidayet Court.
G. H. FITZMAURICE,
British Delegate.

February 18 (*March* 1), 1896.

Inclosure 2 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Ourfa, March 16, 1896.

Sir,

IN conformity with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 7th March, I arrived here on the 10th March.

The gloom of the sad events which had occurred here during the last two months of 1895 still hung over the town, and the Armenian quarter especially, in spite of attempts during the preceding ten weeks to remove the traces of the final disaster, still wore the aspect of a town which had been ruined and laid waste by some scourge more terrible than any war or siege. The shops, with their windows and doors broken in, lay empty and deserted, practically no grown males were visible, and only a few ill-clad and ill-fed children and women, with a scared look on their faces, were to be seen moving about apparently in search of the bare necessities of existence in the shape of dry bread and scanty bedding.

Rumours of further massacres on the approaching festival of Bairam were rife, and the Mussulman population, emboldened by the impunity with which they had carried out the recent massacres, were openly threatening to "wipe out" the remaining Armenian Christians during the Bairam holidays.

The population of Ourfa before the 28th December, 1895, was close on 65,000, of whom about 20,000 were Armenians, 3,000 or 4,000 Jacobites, Chaldeans, Syrian Catholics, Greek Catholics, Maronites, and Jews, and the remaining 40,000 odd Turkish, Kurdish and Arab Mussulmans.

There have been, as your Excellency is aware, two massacres in Ourfa, the first on the 28th and 29th October, 1895, and the second or big massacre on the 28th and 29th December of the same year.

The causes leading up to these massacres were both remote and near.

The attitude of the Turkish Government on the Armenian question since the last Russo-Turkish war has been one calculated to end in some such deplorable catastrophe as that which has recently befallen the Armenian people and the Sultan's Government. Some twelve or fifteen years ago the persistent neglect of the latter to carry out the reforms it had by Treaty promised to introduce into its Armenian provinces, drove a certain number of Armenians in despair to have recourse to revolutionary methods. The Ottoman officials, instead of distinguishing between the guilty and innocent, chose, some from ignorance, many from motives of personal pecuniary gain, to regard all Armenians as traitors, scheming to throw off Ottoman yoke. As usually happens in Oriental countries, when the Central Government had adopted the same view, the real sedition of certain Armenians was confounded and lost in the mass of trumped-up charges, would-be seditious documents and imaginary reports and lists of revolutionary Committees, which poured in from all sides as soon as the demand of the Central Government for such a supply was felt. Turkish officials and leading Moslems criminally communicated these notions to the ignorant and indiscriminating masses of the Mussulman population, who are guided in their general action by the prescriptions of the Sheri Law. That Law prescribes that if the "rayah" Christian attempt, by having recourse ("dekhalet") to foreign Powers, to overstep the limits of privileges ("berat") allowed to them by their Mussulman masters, and free themselves from their bondage, their lives and property are to be forfeited, and are at the mercy of the Mussulmans. To the Turkish mind, the Armenians had tried to overstep those limits by appealing to foreign Powers. They therefore considered it their religious duty and a righteous thing to destroy the lives and seize the property of the Armenians.

The foregoing, strange as it may seem, was the actual frame and working of the Mussulman mind and conscience, when the Armenian demonstration occurred at Constantinople in September last.

I have made careful inquiries as to the extent of Armenian revolutionary propaganda at Ourfa, and have arrived at the conviction that, though there existed a large amount of, to my mind, well-grounded discontent among the Armenians arising from the fact that for some years past they have, in common with their brethren elsewhere in Anatolia, been treated practically as outlaws, the amount of actual disloyalty among them was very restricted.

Armenian Secret Societies in Europe have, as is well-known, been endeavouring to introduce explosives, rifles, and revolutionary literature into the Aleppo region, but their

success at Ourfa has been exceedingly limited. They seem to have smuggled in some revolutionary pamphlets, but no rifles or explosives.

Ourfa, moreover, does not come under even the geographical designation of Armenia, being included rather in the limits of Mesopotamia or "Arabistan" (Arabia).

The foregoing was the state of things at Ourfa when, immediately after the Armenian demonstration in Constantinople, it appears orders were received here from the Central Government to the effect that should the Armenians attempt any disturbance, it was to be at once sternly quelled, and in the event of their offering resistance, they were to receive a terrible lesson ("terbiyyé shedidé"). The Central Government must have known or ought to have known the disastrous consequences which, in view of Mussulman feeling against the Armenians, such instructions were certain to have in the provinces, and it incurred a very grave responsibility in sending them.

The Mussulmans here and elsewhere interpreted them as the Sovereign's wish that they should put into execution the prescriptions of the "Sheri," and proceed to take the lives and property of the rebellious Armenian "rayahs." The demonstration at Constantinople was represented by the officials as an attempt by the Armenians to storm the Sublime Porte; rumours reached here of massacres of Armenians by their coreligionists in other towns in Anatolia; they were told that the Armenians were attacking mosques and using dynamite, while word came from their Mussulman brethren in towns where massacres had occurred inciting them to do their duty by Islam. The Government, too, began to serve out arms and cartridges to the zaptiehs and other guards, and had the Armenian quarter patrolled.

I should add that the telegraphic news of acceptance of the reforms was interpreted to the Mussulmans as the granting of autonomy to the Armenians, an interpretation which must have come from the Government officials, and which had a disastrous effect on Moslem feeling towards Armenians.

While this Moslem feeling at Ourfa was thus excited, an event occurred which precipitated matters. I shall go into it somewhat in detail, as being the much disputed point of departure of the most extensive of recent Armenian massacres.

A Mussulman named Ismail Birejikli had purchased from an Armenian money-changer called Boghos a number of "ghazis," *i.e.*, old gold coins worn as ornaments by native women, and as he was somewhat tardy in paying for them, the Armenian Boghos, on Saturday, the 26th October, 1895, went to the Mussulman's house to demand payment. The latter, apparently incensed at the Armenian coming to his private house to press for the money, abused the money-changer roundly and sent him away, saying he would see him on the morrow.

The following day, Sunday, the 27th October, Ismail, true to his word, went with some comrades to Boghos' house, and, being told the latter was out, proceeded to search for him in the streets. He found him near the Armenian Cathedral, in the Armenian quarter, and at once stabbed him to death. It being Sunday large numbers of Armenians were in the neighbourhood of the Cathedral. They at once seized the Mussulman Ismail, and handed him over to the zaptiehs of a neighbouring guard-house.

The Turkish version of what followed is that the Armenians attacked the guard-house and mortally wounded Ismail, while the Armenians assert that, seeing that the zaptiehs were going to allow the Mussulman murderer to escape, they invaded the guard-house, insisting that the zaptiehs should either hand over the murderer to them to be conveyed to the Government-house, or that they (the Armenians) should accompany the zaptiehs and their prisoner to the Government. On the zaptiehs naturally refusing and trying to turn the Armenians out, a scuffle ensued, in which the prisoner Ismail was seriously wounded. He died on the way while the zaptiehs were conveying him to the Government-house. There an Armenian dispensary doctor, named Melkon, called in by the Major of Gendarmes to give a medical Report, declared that the wounds of which Ismail died were inflicted by zaptieh bayonets. It is asserted that the Major threatened the Armenian doctor Melkon with death if he should declare the wounds to be bayonet wounds. Melkon sought refuge in a Mussulman house, but was sought out on the following day by the Major and a couple of men. He was dragged forth, shot by the Major, and dispatched by the latter's followers. His body was then dragged through the streets with every species of indignity, torn to pieces, and flung into a fosse.

The excitement among the Mussulmans and the uneasiness among the Armenians on Sunday night, October the 27th, the night following the death of Ismail was very great, and some Armenians were about in their quarter on the same night watching in anticipation of an attack. They encountered a Turkish patrol and shots were fired. The Armenian account is that on the Turkish patrol hailing the Armenians, the latter fled

and were fired upon by the zaptiehs, while the Turkish version is that a band of Armenians, armed with Martinis, assaulted the patrol.

As the *mot d'ordre* of the Turkish authorities after the Constantinople demonstration became "attack of Armenians," and their stereotyped official version of the origin of most massacres was the supposed attack of Armenians on mosques during the Friday prayer, the above official account of the patrol incident must be received with great reserve, if not incredulity. It is moreover curious that the patrol said to have been attacked by armed Armenians was in no way hurt or injured, while they on their side did not succeed in capturing any of their Armenian assailants.

I should mention another Armenian version that the alleged attack was made by a band of Turks disguised as Armenians, with the object of giving a protext for massacre.

The few Armenians who ventured down to the bazaar on the following Monday morning, 28th October, came rushing back, most of them wounded and streaming with blood. They were followed by an armed Mussulman mob, who attacked the Armenian quarter, with cries of death to the infidels.

The Armenians, the greater portion of whom had remained at home, seeing that the Mussulmans were bent on a general massacre, began a determined resistance at the principal entrances to their quarter, and finally obliged the mob to retire with a loss of four or five Mussulman lives, they themselves losing some twenty-seven killed.

The mob, baffled for the moment in this direction, turned their attention to plunder. They completely looted and wrecked some 700 Armenian shops and 190 Armenian houses.

The rapidity with which the above incidents succeeded one another seems to point to some preconcerted plan, and it is asserted that a certain Mussulman Notable of Ourfa, Hussein Pasha, who has since been summoned to Aleppo, was the prime mover in the matter, and that Ismail Birejikli, who was a poor man and not likely to be the purchaser of a large number of Ghazi gold coins, was acting on behalf of Hussein Pasha with the object of driving the Armenians into some overt act of violence against a Mussulman, in keeping with the malicious reports spread among the Mussulman population of Armenian outrages on Turkish women throughout Anatolia, and it seems inconceivable that a general attack and massacre of Armenians could have been planned during the one Sunday night of 27th October.

After the Mussulman repulse of Monday, all Armenians found outside the Armenian quarter, within or without the city, were attacked and the males slain. Their quarter was besieged and no egress allowed. Their water supply was cut off and no food permitted to enter. This state of siege lasted practically for two months until the 28th December, the date of the final and great massacre.

The Armenian Bishop wished to telegraph the situation to His Majesty the Sultan, but the authorities refused to allow his telegram to be sent. Thereupon in despair at the hopeless situation of his flock, he retired to his monastery outside the town, where he remained a prisoner till after the second massacre; no Armenian, not even his secretary, being allowed to converse with him, except in Turkish and that in the presence of guards.

On the night of Monday, the Armenians in view of the desperate nature of their position, the post and telegraph being closed to them, dispatched a messenger to Aintab to make known their condition and to get aid. That messenger was subsequently arrested and is now in the Ourfa prison under a heavy sentence for his "seditious" conduct in so doing. Another messenger, dispatched on the following Wednesday night, met with the same fate.

During Tuesday, the 29th October, the mob continued their plundering on the outskirts of the Armenian quarter, and in this they were assisted by the zaptiehs who fired on and over the Armenian quarter, it being afterwards represented to the Mussulmans that the Armenians were firing on the Turks.

On Wednesday, the 30th October, the Mutessarif Hassan Pasha arrived from Surrouj, where he had been absent some ten days; over a thousand Mussulmans, most of whom had been engaged in the attack and plundering of the preceding days, were enrolled as reserves, and the Government called on the Armenians to deliver up their arms, especially the 1,800 Martinis they were supposed to have received from abroad, promising to subsequently disarm the Mussulmans. The Armenians replied that they had no such Martinis, that, as the Mussulmans had been the attacking party and had declared that the Sultan's Government had ordered the extermination of all Armenians, they had no longer any confidence in their Mussulman fellow-citizens, and, consquently, they could give up such arms as they possessed only after the Mussulmans had been

disarmed. The Government insisted, however, that the Armenians should first disarm and that they could hope for no protection until they had delivered up their Martinis.

The newly enrolled reserves were scattered about in the Armenian quarter, nominally for their protection; but they proceeded to tell the Armenians that their extermination had been decided upon by Government. They extorted large sums of money and valuables from them on the promise of protection, and then informed them that only those who turned Moslem would be saved, all such new converts to run up a white flag on their roofs. The Armenians in utter despair turned Moslem *en masse;* and by Thursday night, the white flags on the Christian quarter were innumerable. The Government, however, refused to recognize them officially, but continued its demand for arms.

About this time a paper to the effect that the Armenians had attacked a guard-house, fired upon and killed Mussulmans and zaptiehs, and were resisting the Government forces with modern weapons, was sent round for signature to the heads of the different communities, and even some foreigners. This document was presumably forwarded to head-quarters.

On the 12th November, fifteen prominent Armenians were summoned to the Government House. There they were asked the meaning of their rebellious attitude; they were ordered to at once hand over the 1,800 Martinis, 100 revolvers, and ten men chosen from a list of 120 of those who were alleged to have attacked the guard-house on Sunday, the 27th October, and the Commander of the troops, Nazif Pasha (since removed to Kornah, in the Bassorah Vilayet, after the second massacre), angrily informed them that he had been in Bulgaria in 1876, and knew how to treat rebellious "rayahs."

The Armenians at once handed over the ten men required and while protesting that they had no Martinis, offered and at once proceeded to collect and deliver up any other arms they possessed.

The negotiations for the surrender of their arms lasted for some weeks, the Government, while accepting the ordinary arms handed over by the Armenians, still relentlessly demanding the Martinis and even hinting to the Armenians that if they had none they had money to purchase them. The latter actually bought revolvers and other arms from friendly Turks and other Christians to deliver up to Government, and in despair sought to soften the relentless demand for modern weapons by giving large sums of money to the Mutessarif, the Commander, Nazif Pasha, and other Moslems, while they endeavoured to pacify their so-called guards, the reserves, in a similar way.

By the 30th November they had handed over 240 pieces of arms, mostly old guns, pistols, daggers, &c., and some fifteen revolvers. On the same day, I may mention, Miss Shattuck, the American lady missionary, asked for permission and an escort to go to Aintab, a permission which was granted only on the 28th December, one hour before the final and general massacre.

On the 1st December the mob again attacked and fired into the Armenian quarter. They were, however, held in check by the Government.

By the 3rd December 600 arms of all sorts had been given up, but the Mutessarif and commander still renewed their demands.

The Armenians were now experiencing all the distress of a regular siege. Though they had bribed their guards to get in some food on the pretext that it was intended for the soldiers and had reopened old wells, which had for many years been closed up, their provisions and water supply were giving out, and beasts of burden worth several pounds were disposed of for as many shillings.

At this juncture they resolved to make a desparate attempt to communicate with Aleppo. Having written an account of their situation on a piece of cloth they sewed it into the lining of one of the long garments worn in the country, put it on a poor Armenian peasant not likely to attract the attention or cupidity of the surrounding Kurds, and despatched him at night by an unfrequented road to Aleppo with promises of lavish rewards in case of success. This messenger, however, was waylaid and stripped of the very garment bearing the message.

On the 13th December, on the pretext that tranquillity was completely restored, Nazif Pasha, Commander of the troops, ordered that the few Armenians, whose business places, bakeries, &c., were still workable, should come down and resume their work. On their doing so they were attacked and wounded, and fled back to their quarter. Nazif Pasha forced them to descend again, and with cavalry mounted guard over the few Armenians, who tried to do business under such novel and trying conditions. The Government then forced some twenty-five prominent Armenians to sign a telegram to Constantinople to the effect that, though the peace had been disturbed by the unruly

conduct of some Armenians, owing to the efforts of the local authorities complete tranquillity had been restored.

During the following week, however, though the authorities assured the Armenians they had nothing to fear, and that Government was now going to disarm the Mussulmans, the Armenians having by this time given up, including revolvers and one Martini, 1,200 arms of all kinds, of which a large number had been purchased to meet the demands of the authorities, there were whisperings of a great impending disaster, friendly Turks sent word to the Armenians to be on their guard, and warning was given to the non-Armenian Christians to wear a black turban.

Finally on Saturday, the 28th December, Abdul-Kerim, Captain of gendarmes, went to Miss Shattuck, informing her that she might start for Aintab, as everything was quiet. He then proceeded to the Armenian Cathedral, where the Armenian National Assembly, which had just sent a communication to the Mutessarif detailing their causes of apprehension and soliciting protection, was still sitting. Captain Abdul-Kerim gave them, on the part of the Government, every assurance that no disturbance would occur. He had, however, scarcely left the building when the storm burst, and the general massacre of the 28th and 29th December began.

On the morning of Saturday, the 28th December, Nazif Pasha, Commander of the troops, sent word to the non-Armenian Christians to assemble in their churches and not stir out, but under no consideration to shelter or give asylum to a single Armenian.

The military with some mounted police, under the command of Nazif Pasha, were drawn up on the brow of the hill upon the slope of which the Armenian quarter is built, and were massed at the principal exits from that quarter. Behind them was an armed Mussulman mob, while the minarets were crowded with Moslems evidently in expectation of some stirring event. The Turkish women, too, crowded on to the roofs and the slopes of the fortress, which overlooks the Armenian quarter. Between 10 A.M. and 11 A.M. crowds of armed Mussulmans flocked round in the same direction cheered on by their women, who kept up the well-known "zilghit," or peculiar throat noise, used on such occasions by Oriental women to encourage their braves. Towards noon a "muezzin" gave out the midday prayer from one minaret, all the other minarets remaining silent, a glittering glass ornament resembling a crescent was seen shining from the top of the fortress overlooking one end of the Armenian quarter, while a mollah waved a green banner from a tall minaret overhanging the other end.

A few shots were fired and a trumpet sounded the attack from among the soldiers, who were seen to open their ranks and allow the mob behind them to come forward. Soldiers and mob then rushed on the Armenian quarter and began a general massacre of the males over a certain age.

At the moment the shots above mentioned were fired, the Commander Nazif Pasha was seen to withdraw with a gesture motioning the crowd on. It subsequently transpired that when the first shots were fired he called out, "A Martini bullet has just grazed my head; the Armenians are firing on me; go in and retaliate;" while I have it on good Mussulman authority that the shots referred to were fired not by Armenians but by Moslems.

The reserve troops, who knew the Armenian quarter well from their having been on guard there during the two preceding months, served both as guides and advance guard, being accompanied by a body of wood cutters, axe in hand, from the neighbouring mountains. The latter broke in the doors, whereupon the soldiers rushed in emptying their Martinis on the Armenian men, from whom they had anticipated a certain resistance. They had, however, given up all their arms, and, in abject terror at their dreadful situation, pleaded for mercy for the sake of their women and children and the Prophet Jesus. With insulting language they were dragged out one by one from their hiding-places and brutally butchered. In many instances from fifteen to twenty men had collected in the larger houses as affording some chance of safety. They were hurled out one after another to the executioners, who speedily dispatched them. In the house next to that of the Protestant pastor (he, too, was slain, leaving six orphans), where I put up during my stay here, forty men were thus put to death. A certain Sheikh ordered his followers to bring as many stalwart young Armenians as they could find. They were, to the number of about 100, thrown on their backs, and held down by their hands and feet, while the Sheikh, with a combination of fanaticism and cruelty, proceeded, while reciting verses of the Koran, to cut their throats after the Mecca rite of sacrificing sheep.

Many Armenian men again secreted themselves at the bottom of wells in the hope of escaping from their would-be destroyers; but the latter hurled down jars and stones,

and then fired down revolver shots, or flung down matting saturated with petroleum, which they then set on fire.

In several cases women and girls were mercilessly cut down while trying to shield their male relatives.

When all the men had been killed in a house, the mob proceeded to plunder in the most minute way, pouring kerosene on and burning corn, barley, woodwork, and whatever they could not carry away, and leaving only bare walls and floors.

While this house-to-house carnage was going on, a constant firing from the brow of the hill down over the quarter was kept up on Armenians who tried to escape by the roofs.

Towards sunset, as at noon, the trumpet was again sounded, and the mob at once withdrew, with the exception of a few stragglers who remained to loot.

On the following day (Sunday, the 29th December) the trumpet was sounded at early dawn, and the massacre was resumed. Large numbers who on Saturday had not taken part in the attack fearing Armenian resistance, joined the mob on Sunday.

The savage butchery of the previous day was continued till noon, when took place the burning of the Ourfa Armenian Cathedral, an act which for fiendish barbarity has been unsurpassed by any of the horrors of recent massacres of Armenians, and for which the annals of history can furnish few, if any, parallels.

On Saturday night crowds of Armenian men, women, and children took refuge in their fine cathedral, capable of holding some 8,000 persons, and the priest administered the sacrament, the last sacrament as it proved to be, to 1,800 souls, recording the figure on one of the pillars of the church. These remained in the cathedral overnight and were joined on Sunday by several hundreds more who sought the protection of a building which they considered safe from the mob-violence of the Mussulman even in his fanaticism. It is computed that at least 3,000 individuals were congregated in the edifice, when the mob attacked it.

They at first fired in through the windows, then smashed in the iron door, and proceeded to massacre all those, mostly men, who were on the ground floor.

Having thus disposed of the men, and having removed some of the younger women, they rifled the church treasure, shrines, and ornaments to the extent of some £T. 4,000, destroying the pictures and relics, mockingly calling on Christ now to prove himself a greater prophet than Mohammed.

A huge, partly stone, partly wooden, gallery running round the upper portion of the cathedral was packed with a shrieking and terrified mass of women, children, and some men.

Some of the mob, jumping on the raised altar platform, began picking off the latter with revolver shots, but as this process seemed too tedious, they bethought themselves of the more expeditious method employed against those who had hidden in the wells. Having collected a quantity of bedding and the church matting they poured some thirty cans of kerosene on it, as also on the dead bodies lying about, and then set fire to the whole. The gallery beams and wooden framework soon caught fire, whereupon, blocking up the staircases leading to the gallery with similar inflammable materials, they left the mass of struggling human beings to become the prey of the flames.

During several hours the sickening odour of roasting flesh pervaded the town, and even to-day, two months and a-half after the massacre, the smell of putrescent and charred remains in the church is unbearable.

At 3:30 P.M., at the Moslem afternoon prayer ("ikindi namaz"), the trumpet again sounded and the mob drew off from the Armenian quarter. Shortly afterwards the Mufti, Ali Effendi, Hussein Pasha, and other Notables, preceded by music, among which were brass military instruments, went round the quarter, announcing that the massacre was at an end ("paydoss"), and that there would be no more killing of Christians.

The next three days were occupied in removing the dead bodies, the Jews and donkeys being requisitioned by the authorities for that purpose.

Christians were not allowed to enter the church, now a ruin, the work of clearing out the débris being intrusted to the military, who are reported to have picked up large quantities of melted gold and valuables hidden about their persons by the Armenians, in their vain hope that the cathedral would be considered a sanctuary.

The massacre was decidedly anti-Armenian, no distinction being made between Gregorians, Protestants, and Roman Catholics, whose church was also rifled. Only forty Jacobites out of 300 families and one Greek Catholic were killed, while two or three Chaldeans were wounded and none killed.

The thoroughness with which some of the work was done may be understood from

the fact that 126 Armenian families have been absolutely wiped out, not even a woman or a baby remaining.

The task of computing the number of Armenians who met their death in this massacre is very difficult. The Turkish official registers of the former Armenian population and what now remains are utterly unreliable, owing to the large numbers unregistered in order to escape taxation, while many unofficial Turkish estimates of Armenian losses are far in excess of those given by the Armenians themselves, and are evidently exaggerated. After very minute and careful inquiry, I believe that close on 8,000 Armenians perished in the two days' massacre of the 28th and 29th December, 1895, between 2,500 and 3,000 of whom were killed or burned in the cathedral.

I should, however, not be at all surprised if the figure of 9,000 or 10,000 were subsequently found to be nearer the mark.

Moreover, the condition of the thousands of widows, many thousands of orphans, and the grown-up men who remain, is wretched in the last extreme. At present the mortality, owing to uncared wounds, hunger, disease, and general extreme low physical and moral condition, is great, and may become still greater.

The loss of property, estimated roughly at from £T. 150,000 to £T. 200,000, is still harder to calculate. The majority have practically lost all except the clothes on their backs, while the authorities have made no serious attempt to restore the plundered property. Families which were formerly well off are now reduced to penury, and are too proud to ask assistance. Many of the children are unable to claim and look after the house and land property of their dead parents, and a great portion of this property is certain to be lost. Again, many Mussulmans, especially villagers, were largely indebted to the town Armenians. These debts are now unrecoverable, as the Mussulman thinks he has the same right to retain this property of the rebellious Armenian "rayah" as he had to take their lives and other property. In fact, one of the features and results of recent massacres has been the veritable "seisachtheia," as regards Mussulman debts to Armenians.

The general position of Armenians here and in the surrounding country, if not, indeed, in the Asiatic provinces of the Empire, is deplorable. They are practically considered as outlaws, and it almost amounts to a capital offence in the eyes of the Mussulmans to be an Armenian. Nothing but the stern punishment of the Mussulmans who have been prominent in recent massacres and disorders, combined with a long period of tranquillity, can restore confidence, and it is very doubtful whether this period of tranquillity will be vouchsafed to the Sultan's Government. That Government has committed the fatal error of confounding the guilty with the innocent, and, instead of using its just rights to punish with all the severity of the law such Armenians as have engaged in really treasonable action against their lawful rulers, it has committed the further and all but irreparable blunder of allowing the Mussulman population to usurp the prerogatives of Government by wreaking their blind and unreasoning fury on a, to a great extent, guiltless section of His Majesty's most intelligent, hard-working, and useful subjects.

The magnitude of the Ourfa disaster, in spite of official perverted accounts and denials, seems to have startled even the Turkish Government; but its intention of instituting a strict inquiry, and punishing the officials responsible for it, may be seriously doubted, from the haste with which some of these officials were removed to distant portions of the Empire—Hassan Bey, the Major of Gendarmes, mainly the cause of the first massacre of the 28th October, having been sent to Jannina; while Nazif Pasha, Brigadier-General in command of the troops who led on the second massacre, was at once removed to Kornah, at the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris.

The local authorities at Ourfa and in other towns of the region I have visited, excluding the Zeitoun incident, upon the origin of which I am not in a position to pronounce an opinion, have not, I believe, connived at or brought about these massacres without having in their hands justificatory instructions. These instructions are the result of their deliberate and criminal misrepresentations to Constantinople regarding the Armenians, together with the false and unstatesmanlike attitude of the Central Government on the whole question. It is difficult to apportion the blame exactly between the Central and Provincial Governments, but, I am sure, the Sultan's Government feels that the secret mechanism which brought about this wholesale destruction of life and property will not bear the light of day; and that Government will never, unless under such outside pressure as that of 1861 in Syria, consent to make a serious inquiry, preferring to profess belief in the distorted versions of recent occurrences furnished by unscrupulous provincial functionaries. Diplomatic pressure may prevail upon the Sultan to send a Commission to investigate; but unless the element of fear of

foreign interference by force enters into the deliberations of such a Commission, its proceedings, as far as eliciting the real truth and repairing the disasters is concerned, will be farcical, and, while serving to deceive Europe, will only aggravate the deplorable lot of the Christian populations of these provinces.

There is one fact which stands out prominently amid the confusion of statements and counter-statements with regard to recent events. All sections of the Ottoman populations, in spite of their general ignorance, have a keen *flair* as to the main tendency of the wishes of their autocratic Government; and both Mussulmans and non-Mussulmans assert that the Government wished these massacres to take place, and that if it had not so wished they could not have taken place.

That Government has been since in possession of both sides of the question, but so far it shrinks from inquiry, and manifests no desire to repair these disasters. Until it does so, its populations will not absolve it from the charge of having deliberately worked up these massacres.

Amid the wild devastation and destruction which has swept over this region there is one large Armenian village, named "Guermuch," which has so far escaped. This extraordinary fact happened in the following way:—When the Moslems attacked the Armenians of Ourfa, a mounted and armed multitude of tribal Kurds and Arabs bore down upon Guermuch. The Armenians, pitching a few tents they possessed in front of the village, made as large a display of armed force as they could muster, firing off their guns, and at the same time sending forward word to their assailants that the tents were occupied by soldiers sent by the Government to protect the village. The Arabs and Kurds, who had been incited to destroy the village, were puzzled, deceived, and withdrew, under the impression that the Government, for some inexplicable reason, was really protecting the villagers of Guermuch.

The authorities of Ourfa shortly afterwards summoned the Guermuch Armenians to deliver up the arms with which they were alleged to have attacked the Mussulman Kurds and Arabs. The Armenians, however, came in in a body to Ourfa, telling the authorities that if Government wished them to be massacred, they had better do so at once and on the spot in Ourfa, as they (the Armenians) were completely at their mercy, but that they would never surrender their weapons, which were their only protection against the surrounding armed and hostile Kurdish and Arab tribes. They still remain untouched and retain their arms, for which latter privilege they have paid no inconsiderable sums of money.

Your Excellency has further instructed me to inquire into the number of Armenians at Ourfa who have accepted Islamism in consequence of recent events.

That number in Ourfa is between 400 and 500. Some of these became Mussulmans between the first and second massacre (*i.e.*, between the 28th October and the 29th December, 1895), some during the second massacre, and the remainder since that massacre. They did so under threats, or under the conviction that there was no security of life and property, either from Government or from their Moslem neighbours for any Armenians who openly professed Christianity.

Though Government has not sanctioned the carrying out of the legal formalities necessary in the case of conversions to Islam, and can thus say it does not officially recognize the neophytes, the latter are treated as Mussulmans by the officials and Moslem population.

The statements and facts contained in the foregoing account of the Ourfa massacre constitute a grave charge against the Ottoman Government, and I have been duly impressed with the responsibility of embodying them in an official Report.

Though the secret and terrorising methods of the Turkish Administration do not always permit of the production of the evidence usually required by a European Court, I have been at great pains to sift carefully my information, the greater portion of which I have obtained direct from Mussulman sources, or have had confirmed by Mussulman authority.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Adiaman, March* 25, 1896.

IN accordance with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 9th March to visit and report upon the massacre and consequent conversions to Islamism in this town, I arrived here on the 23rd March.

The massacre here began on the 7th November, 1895, and lasted three days. About the 1st and 2nd November, the dates of the massacres at Diarbekir and Severek, the Armenians here obtained information of a plot among the Mussulmans to massacre them, and besought the protection of the local authorities. The Kaïmakam gave them all possible assurances, but, not being reassured, they wished to telegraph their fears to the superior authorities. Their telegrams, though accepted, were not sent, and on the 7th November, Thursday, a mob of the town Mussulmans and neighbouring Kurds, mainly instigated it appears by a local magnate, Sheikh Agha, assaulted the Christian quarter.

The population of Adiaman consisted of about 11,000 Mussulmans and 4,000 Christians, of whom some 250 were Syrians. The same plan was followed as in other recent massacres in these parts. They killed 410 persons, mostly males, including two priests, and then collected the women and children, with such men as had managed to hide during the period allowed for the massacre, in a large caravanserai, where they remained in a wretched state of terror and destitution for a week. The mob wished to set fire to this building and burn them all, and was only prevented from doing so by the exertions chiefly of the Kadi.

During their detention there, their houses were completely sacked, the windows, doors, and almost every particle of iron being carried off. One hundred houses were ruined, seventy fired, and the Gregorian, Catholic, Syrian, and Protestant churches plundered and ransacked, the tomb of an American missionary in the Protestant church having been desecrated.

As a result of the massacre, there are 250 new widows and 370 new orphans, while twenty-six Armenians were wounded, but escaped with their lives. Among the 410 killed were 25 Syrians.

The loss of Christians' property is estimated at £ T. 70,000, and the authorities have made no effort to have stolen property restored, while not a single Mussulman connected with the massacre has been in any way punished.

During the massacre some 150 Armenians of this town became Moslems, but only forty-seven still profess that religion, the remainder having returned to their old faith.

The number of conversions in the neighbouring villages, mainly through the instrumentality of the Kurdish Aghas, I calculate at about 840.

The principal feature of the Adiaman massacre was the thoroughness of the plundering, the loss of life, 410 out of some 2,000 males, being comparatively small, while the fact that the majority of the converts have returned to Christianity points to the absence of the element of fierce religious fanaticism.

The Government officials here, as elsewhere, might have easily prevented the massacre, but preferred from some motive to allow it to take place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Adiaman, March* 26, 1896.

THE following facts regarding the massacre during November last at the neighbouring town of Severek, in the Diarbekir Vilayet, may have a certain interest and value. I give them, however, with some reserve, as I have not had an occasion of verifying them by personal inquiry on the spot, but I believe them, meagre as they are, to be fairly reliable, as they come from a trustworthy source.

The population of Severek was about 18,000 or 20,000, of whom some 6,000 were Armenian or Syrian Christians, and the remainder Mussulman Kurds.

During July, August, and September of 1895, the Severek Christians were roughly treated by their Moslem neighbours, and threatened with annihilation.

The final massacre began on the 2nd November, the day following that of Diarbekir, and lasted several days. The plundering was of an exceedingly thorough nature, even the stone flooring (Severek stone is of a hard and valuable kind) of many Christian houses having been removed, while the killing was of a scarcely less thorough nature, close on 800 out of the 1,500 Christian grown-up males having been slain.

The Syrians and Chungushly Armenians who inhabited the same quarter were almost exterminated.

In many cases the alternatives of death or Islam were offered to the Christians, and about 200 accepted the latter.

No distinction was made between Armenian and Syrian.

Churches were not respected, those of the Gregorians, Protestants, and Syrians having been sacked.

Osman Agha, the most powerful local magnate, is charged with having been the fomenter of the massacre, and he was certainly influential enough to have prevented it if he had so desired.

I may add that a number of the Christians fled to Veranshehr, and were there protected by a Kurdish Chief, Ibrahim Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Behesni, March* 27, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that I arrived here on the 26th March, in conformity with your Excellency's instructions.

This town can boast of the enviable reputation of being the only white spot on the map of this region, no massacre or disturbance resulting in a serious loss of life or property having occurred here.

The fact is, owing to the attitude of the local Mussulman Notables, chiefly a certain Yakob Pasha, who absolutely refused to be a party to or allow any injury to be done to the 2,000 Armenian Christians of Behesni. In doing so they have incurred the resentment of the neighbouring Mussulman populations, and, I understand, their conduct has not met with the commendation one might have expected from the authorities.

About the 10th November, 1895, shortly after the massacres at Adiaman and Severek, large bands of Kurds arrived, with the intention of attacking the Behesni Armenians, but manifested considerable surprise on encountering the resistance of the Behesni Mussulmans, who declared that their Armenians were peaceable, and that they would not allow them to be molested.

The Kurds withdrew, but returned shortly afterwards only to meet with the same resistance.

Government then dispatched troops to the town, and they, on the Kurds renewing the attack, fired upon the latter, killing and wounding some twenty of them.

The troops did so without consulting the Mussulman Notables, who maintained that, by the exercise of their personal influence, they could have warded off this third attack without the shedding of blood.

The Armenians of Behesni are still safe, and it is to be hoped that they will escape the recurrence of any such disorder as that which has just occurred at Killis on the 20th March.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Aleppo, April 9, 1896.*

I BEG to offer the following remarks on the question of the recent conversions to Islamism in the region which I have just traversed :—

In addition to the numbers of converts already reported by me (Birejik town and district, 4,300; Ourfa, 500; Severek, 200; Adiaman and district, 900, *i.e.*, 5,900 in all), I learnt while at Marash that 200 Armenian houses in the Albistan district, 116 individual Armenians in the Anderm district, and a large number in the villages close to Marash had also adopted Islamism.

The pretence of the authorities that, by refusing to allow the performance of the legal formalities required in the case of conversion to Islam, they have not recognized the new converts, is what I must call in plain language a sham.

The local authorities have in no instance, to my knowledge, taken the necessary steps to secure these Armenians the degree of confidence and freedom requisite to enable them to resume the practice of their old faith, nor have they, during the few months which have elapsed since the massacres, prevented the Mussulman population from forcing these Armenians by threats of death or otherwise to adopt in its entirety their new religion. They are obliged to wear turbans, to attend mosques, and learn the Koran, to be circumcised, not to speak Armenian, and to be known officially and privately under the Mussulman names. I have myself seen some of these new Armenian converts, members of an Administrative Council, at sittings of that Council, presided over by the chief administrative authority, addressed by their Moslem names, and affixing their official seals which also bore these names.

Many of these Armenians, seeing the impossibility of again professing Christianity in their native towns, have abandoned their property, and fled to other towns, where they were not known, and could, in poverty, practise their old faith. The authorities have sought them out, and forced them to return to their native places, where they are once more obliged to live as Mussulmans.

The aspects of the conversion question differ in different towns. In some places like Marash and Aintab, where there remains a large Christian population, a great part of the new converts can, by keeping out of observation, gradually and in the course of time, avoid the profession of Islamism. In others, like Adiaman, where the massacre does not seem to have been characterized by intense religious fanaticism, the majority of the converts have reverted to their former religion. But at Albistan and Birejik, and generally in the villages, where the entire Christian population has turned Moslem, the problem is much more difficult. The old Mussulmans of these places show their extreme aversion, backed up by very significant threats, which the authorities do not prevent, to allowing the former Christians to return to Christianity, and as no Christian houses or priests remain, it is impossible for them to make even a secret profession of their old religion, owing to the smallness of the towns and the consequent close every-day relations between both sections of population.

This conversion question, if not the most serious, is the ugliest feature of recent massacres. It is also the most difficult of remedy, for, though enlightened interpretations of the Mussulman religious and civil law do not sanction such peculiar changes of religion, yet the ignorant masses of the Mussulman population, whose fanaticism has been deeply stirred, and who have now for some time regarded and treated the new converts as Moslems, would, in case of their reverting to Christianity, consider them as renegades, and thus punishable by death, according to the precepts of the Koran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

No. 67.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 336. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 27, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 319 of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Jeddah, making further observations on the subject of the Vali's visit of excuse, and insisting on the desirability of his recall.

I entirely agree with Mr. Alban that the Vali ought to be dismissed; at the same time, I feel convinced that the pilgrimage will never be put on a satisfactory footing until the matter is seriously taken in hand by one or more of the European Powers, and such a display of force made as will compel compliance with the demands made.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Jeddah, April 2, 1896.*

IN my despatch of the 30th ultimo I reported to your Excellency on the official visit of excuse made by the Vali, Ahmed Ratib Pasha, on the 30th ultimo, and I have now the honour to make a few observations on that subject and on the general behaviour of the Vali.

The visit of the Vali has created a considerable impression here, it being well known that he was forced to come here for that purpose much against his will. It is regarded as a deep personal humiliation to himself, and as well deserved in view of his culpable inactivity in the matter of the arrest of the assailants of the Consuls and his general misconduct.

On the other hand, although it is well known that the visit of the Vali was not officially in any sense satisfaction for or termination of the incident of the 30th May last, and that the Vali was pressed by myself and my French colleague to continue to endeavour to arrest the culprits, there is undoubtedly an impression among the public and the Turkish officials here that there is now no immediate necessity for any further measures, and that by the time the pilgrimage is over the matter will be practically forgotten, and no further satisfaction will be demanded. That the incident should terminate in this way would, I think, be almost as great a disappointment to many of the better class of natives as to the European Colony, for the former, like the latter, attribute the chief responsibility for the outrage to the Grand Shereef, whose unpopularity is extreme, and consider that the Vali has made no real attempt to arrest the culprits. I have been asked repeatedly whether the matter is now closed, and I have replied that the arrest of the assassins is being demanded, and that the question remains unchanged. I can see, however, that it is considered certain that no further steps will be taken by the local authorities, and that some surprise is felt that the Vali has not yet been recalled, as has been constantly expected.

The conduct of the Vali throughout this matter has been discreditable. Although, during his visit to me, he performed his unwelcome task with propriety, his explanation as to the measures taken by him was most unsatisfactory. If his statement be accepted as correct, it was a confession of deplorable impotence, but it was evident to me that he could but thinly disguise the fact that he had never contemplated the arrest of the culprits, or taken any serious measures to apprehend them. His remarks as to the reasons of the attack, no less than his manner in making them, convinced me that he knew the real reason, which was one which he found it impossible to divulge. During his nine months residence here, in spite of the requests of some of my colleagues and myself for information, he never condescended to acquaint us with any of his proceedings either in writing or through the Kaïmakam here, and in some cases returned no reply to our letters.

But it is not only with reference to the incident of the attack on the Consuls that I, and I can confidently say my colleagues, have serious complaints to make against Ratib Pasha. I have already reported to your Excellency his general discourtesy in the matter of correspondence with the Consular Corps, which is due to his ignorance of official usages and his extreme arrogance, and perhaps also to the consciousness that in many instances he has no satisfactory reply to make. I have also reported to your Excellency certain cases in which his conduct has been especially reprehensible. I should add that there are several questions pending, in which it has cost me the utmost trouble to effect any progress, while in addition to the action of the Vali respecting pilgrim brokers and Hassan Daood, which I have already reported, there are one or two other matters affecting the welfare of the pilgrims which I am now treating with him, and which in the course of the next day or two I shall probably be obliged to refer to your Excellency, as I have reason to believe that the Vali has wilfully made false statements to me on the subject, while his promises have, as usual, proved worthless. But for my desire to avoid adding to the numerous matters which already occupy your Excellency's attention, I should perhaps have been tempted to follow the example of one or more of my colleagues who, in despair, have practically ceased to correspond with the Vali except on the most trivial matters. I have, however, persevered in my endeavour to settle matters here in spite of the Vali's attitude, and have only referred to your Excellency when I saw no prospect of obtaining any satisfactory result.

I should state that in almost all the cases of extortion from pilgrims, or other matters which form the subject of complaint here, the Grand Shereef (encouraged by his agent, Omar Nassif, and the unscrupulous gang which surrounds him) is the originator and prime mover, and, emboldened by impunity, he disregards the most stringent orders from Constantinople. This has always been the case, but many of the previous Valis have been a check on him, and a strong Vali (like Osman Pasha, who resolutely opposed the Grand Shereef) may do much to keep him within certain bounds, although dismissal is, through the intrigues of the Grand Shereef, sure to follow speedily. The present Vali, however, so far from being a check on the Grand Shereef, screens and supports him, although affecting ignorance of his proceedings in order not to openly appear in the matter himself. Though, warned by past experience, he occasionally counsels greater caution, he invariably ends by acquiescing in the Shereef's schemes, and is careful to obtain for himself a full share of the resulting profits. He has been his partner in all his more audacious schemes, notably in 1893 in the Herklot's affair (reported in the late Dr. Abdur Razzack's despatch of the 25th July, 1893); he joined him in running pilgrim-ships in 1894, which resulted in a loss to the Grand Shereef but a profit to the astute Vali, and he is now, though with some misgivings, supporting the Shereef in his plans for extortion during the coming pilgrimage.

Already there have been causes of complaint, although, as a rule, the campaign against the pilgrims does not commence until the last days of the month of the pilgrimage, and more especially at the moment of their return here. It is therefore evident that when that period arrives, there will be the same coercion and extortion as were practised by the Shereef and the present Vali in 1893 (also a Haj Akbar), unless preventive measures are taken now.

The most urgent measure is, I venture to state, the immediate dismissal of the present Vali, and I earnestly beg that your Excellency will give this suggestion your serious consideration. I have had some experience of good, bad, and indifferent Turkish and Arab functionaries, but I have never, I think, met one who displayed incapacity, dishonesty, official discourtesy and unblushing mendacity in a more striking degree than Ahmed Ratib Pasha, and in saying this I am not in any way exceeding the popular estimate of his character. Apart from other grounds, his attitude as regards the outrage on the Consuls is alone sufficient to warrant his dismissal. His recall would have an excellent effect here, and the appointment of a strong Vali, who would be a check on the Grand Shereef, would save the pilgrims from much ill-treatment and extortion during the coming months.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

No. 68.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 337.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 27, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 638 of the 1st October, 1895, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, transmitting an extract from a private letter respecting the situation at Kharput, and the imprisonment of Armenians at Keghi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 68.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 10, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency extracts from a private letter, dated Kharput, 28th March, giving an account of the present situation there.

With regard to the Armenians therein mentioned as still imprisoned at Keghi, for having been the bearers of a Memorial addressed to the British, French, and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople by the Christians of Palu, as reported in my despatch to your Excellency of the 20th September, 1895, I propose to take an early opportunity of drawing the attention of Raouf Pasha to their case, as Keghi is within the Vilayet of Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 68.

Extract from Private Letter dated Kharput, March 28, 1896.

(Extract.)

YOU may remember that a number of Palu people were imprisoned in Keghi several months ago, who were carrying a Petition from Palu to Erzeroum, to be forwarded to the Constantinople Embassies. These men are still in prison in Keghi. Many Palulis are here, especially the prominent men from the villages. A summons has come this week for two or three men from the village of Hovav to go to Keghi on this matter. Arson and murder it seems are of less account than an appeal to friendly European Powers.

There is no movement towards a release of prisoners here and in Arabkir, and there are no trials of the so-called political prisoners.

The problem of the future of this people is extremely difficult. The Vali told me yesterday that there are the strictest orders against giving teskérés to any one who is not known to be going on a definite business. A naturalized American, who, however, has not shown his passport, failed to get permission to take his wife to Constantinople.

There are occasional acts of violence in the villages, and it will be some time before confidence is restored. From the cazas the reports are less reassuring. In Arabkir the Turks are largely armed, and the frequent firing of guns disturbs the minds of the people very much.

I should have said, in connection with emigration that there is little business; the farmers are not able to work; and the chief stimulus to business is the money which comes through our hands.

Things are in a bad way in Malatia, and it seems very necessary that there should be a radical change in the personnel of the Administration. The Mutessarif is a notoriously bad man. Rashid Bey, the head of the Sultan's "Chiftlik," the Zaptieh Binbashi, the Cadi, and some others are also men who ought to be sent away.

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No. 69.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 338.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 29, 1896.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the Vali of Diarbekir had reported that the authorities of that vilayet were furnishing the cultivators with seed and cattle, and that the requirements of the latter were now fully supplied.

I telegraphed to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, inquiring whether he could confirm the report, and I have now received from Mr. Hallward a reply stating that the officials of the Government have not, so far as he has been able to discover, furnished any seed or cattle to the peasants; the latter, on the contrary, complain that they cannot obtain the restoration of their stolen cattle and goods, although they know where they are to be found.

A little grain is given to the peasants by the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 70.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury—(Received May 4.).

(No. 341.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 29, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 129 of the 15th April, reporting that a Turkish Kaïmakam had been appointed to Zeitoun, and that the Embassies were protesting against this infraction of the Reform Decree, and of the mediation arrangement with the Zeitounlis, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that on the 19th instant Mr. Block, together with the Russian, French, Austrian, and Italian Dragomans, proceeded to the Porte, for the purpose of making joint representations on the subject.

The Foreign Minister stated, in reply to the joint communication which was made to him, and of which I have the honour to inclose a copy—

1. That the appointment in question was only provisional and not a permanent one.

2. That at the time of the mediation of the Ambassadors in the Zeitoun difficulty the Porte entered into no definite engagement to appoint a Christian Kaïmakam for that district, and that nothing more could be said than that such appointment had been generally provided for in the scheme of reforms.

3. That it would not be right to appoint a Christian Kaïmakam to Zeitoun in view of the fact that no other Christian Kaïmakam had as yet been appointed in Anatolia, and that the nomination at this juncture of such a Kaïmakam to Zeitoun would lead the other Christians to think that they had only to revolt to obtain what they wanted.

Mr. Block strongly urged Tewfik Pasha to give the matter his very serious consideration, but as yet the Embassies have only received an assurance from his Excellency to the effect that the Grand Vizier was about to take measures which he hoped would satisfy the demands of the Ambassadors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 70.

Joint Communication made to the Porte by the Ambassadors.

IL résulte des informations parvenues aux Ambasssadeurs et confirmées en voie officieuse par la Sublime Porte qu'un Caïmacam Musulman vient d'être nommé à Zéitoun.

La Sublime Porte n'ignore pas que la désignation d'un Caïmacam Chrétien dans ce district, déjà prévenu par le projet de réformes adopté pour l'Anatolie, était une des conditions formellement stipulée pour la cessation des hostilités à Zéitoun.

Les Ambassadeurs dont la responsabilité est directement engagée dans cet arrangement ne sauraient admettre une telle infraction de la promesse qui leur a été faite. Ils réclament de la manière la plus formelle le respect de cette promesse.

No. 71.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 343.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 30, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of telegrams which have been received by the French and Italian Ambassadors, from their Consuls at Marash, reporting various incidents which have taken place in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 71.

M. Barthélemy to the French Ambassador at Constantinople.

(Télégraphique.) *Marache, le 21 Avril, 1896.*

J'AI ramené dans la montagne de Yenidjekalé les Pères ainsi qu'une partie des réfugiés. Tous sont campés sous des tentes. Je prie votre Excellence de demander pour les Pères l'autorisation de s'aménager des habitations provisoires sur les ruines de leurs couvents.

Le Mutessarif s'est toujours opposé au rapatriement de tous les réfugiés malgré les ravages causés par le typhus tant à Zéitoun qu'ici. C'est sans doute dans l'espérance de voir réduire leur nombre par l'épidémie. Il ameute les paysans Musulmans contre les nôtres. La garde de zaptiés qu'on leur a donnée pour la forme craint de les protéger. J'ai suspendu les départs, craignant une nouvelle affaire Salvatore.

Ici même, le domicile des Franciscains n'est plus respecté. Le 9 Avril, pendant mon séjour à Dennjuili, le Mutessarif a fait arrêter dans le couvent de Marache un Catholique, sujet Ottoman.

Le pillage et l'incendie des couvents ont eu pour auteurs les Musulmans du district et non les soldats. Les couvents incendiés sont ceux de Buyuk Keuy et de Moudjong Deressi, les plus importants des trois, mais tous les trois ont été pillé.

Les Pères sollicitent l'obtention de Firmans autorisant la reconstruction des trois couvents et des églises, notamment celles des paroisses Franciscaines d'Aintab et de Marache.

Il faut s'attendre à l'opposition du Mutessarif qui n'est qu'un instrument dans la main des Notables Musulmans et de Mgr. Azarian, jaloux de la prospérité des Missions Franciscaines. Sans ces Firmans la protection d'un Agent serait illusoire. Il y a lieu d'envisager dès à présent l'éventualité d'un exode de tous les Chrétiens de ce vilayet et ses conséquences financières pour l'Empire.

Inclosure 2 in No. 71.

Signor Vitto to the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople.

(Télégraphique.) *Marache, le 24 Avril*, 1896.

JE crois devoir vous informer que quelques jours avant mon départ de Zéitoun, Edhem avait ordonné de faire repatrier trois Arméniens de Aintab, sous prétexte que ces individus étaient suspects, menaçant les chefs de la ville de rétablir le blocus, s'ils n'étaient pas livrés. Sur la promesse à moi donnée par Edhem que ces trois Arméniens seraient amenés à Aintab en toute sécurité je les persuadai à se constituer [*sic*]. Arrivés à Marache, ils ont été emprisonnés, soumis à une instruction criminelle, et, en attendant roués comme les autres, de coups de bâton.

Inclosure 3 in No. 71.

M. Barthélemy to the French Ambassador at Constantinople.

(Télégraphique.) *Marache, le 26 Avril*, 1896.

MALGRÉ les ordres donnés par la Porte les autorités continuent leurs vexations contre les missionnaires à Yenidjekalé; elles leur interdisent de tailler leurs vignes, d'ensemencer leurs champs, d'acheter des bœufs de labour et des matériaux de construction; on éloigne d'eux leurs fidèles par l'emprisonnement, on leur dénie le droit de pourvoir aux besoins spirituels des Chrétiens. Les Pères sont assiégés dans leur campement par la population Musulmane ameutée contre eux par les autorités. J'ai envoyé mon cavass à leur secours. Le Mutessarif n'oppose à mes remontrances que des dénégations. Devra-t-il longtemps encore mettre notre patience à l'épreuve? Si oui, je sollicite comme une faveur d'être remplacé. On ne discute pas avec un fonctionnaire qui ne rêve qu'effusion de sang, pillage, et incendie.

Le missionnaire Espagnol que j'ai fait sortir à la fin de Janvier de Zéitoun m'a écrit qu'il sera sans doute forcé de tout abandonner et de se retirer. C'est aussi mon avis. Sa position n'est plus tenable. La population Chrétienne de ce sandjak songe à émigrer; elle vit sous la terreur enfermée dans ses demeures dont elle n'ose sortir; elle est menacée de périr de faim ne pouvant vaquer à ses travaux. Si tous les Chrétiens ne sont pas jetés en prison, ce n'est que grâce au manque de locaux et de crédit, car tous sont compromis, nous assure le Mutessarif. Les Juges même subissent la pression des autorités; ils nous demandent en secret la liberté de pouvoir juger selon leur conscience.

La Porte tolère que le Gouverneur de Marache viole les clauses de l'amnestie accordée par elle. En outre tous les détenus prévenus de crimes se rattachant aux troubles bien qu'ils n'aient eu que le tort de se défendre contre la troupe qui les traît chez eux, ne méritent-ils pas autant que les Zéitounlis la grâce du Souverain dont ils n'ont pas combattu l'armée?

Le Mudir ordonne aux Catholiques de Lagabane, dans le Caza d'Andarine, réfugié à Zéitoun, de regagner leur pays, le Mutessarif s'oppose à leur retour; dans cette situation difficile ces gens s'adressent à nous. Que dois-je faire?

Hier soir je parcourais le quartier de Choker Dere, dont les habitants Chrétiens avaient été brûlés vifs dans leurs maisons par les soldats et les Musulmans le 18 Novembre, quand un coup de fusil fut tiré sur moi par un indigène Musulman. Les témoins déclarent qu'ils n'osent donner son nom tant que le Mutessarif et le Gouverneur Militaire ne seront pas changés. Cet incident me paraît bien caractériser la situation et c'est pour cela réellement que je l'ai rapporté.

No. 72.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 344.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30*, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a telegram which has been received by the French Ambassador from his Consul at Erzeroum, reporting on Shakir Pasha's movements and on the alarming state of affairs at Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 72.

M. Roqueferrier to the French Ambassador at Constantinople.

(Télégraphique.) *Erzeroum, le 28 Avril*, 1896.

SHAKIR PACHA n'a pas fixé le jour de son départ pour Erzindjian: ce sera très prochainement. Il est probable que M. Prjevalski l'accompagnera.

J'ai demandé hier au Maréchal s'il ne ferait pas mieux d'aller d'abord à Van surveiller les Kurdes. Il affecte une confiance exagérée et semble peu désireux d'aller dans cette galère.

Le courrier nous apporte de Van des nouvelles très inquiétantes. Deux villages ont encore été saccagés par les Kurdes près de Van—un gendarme blessé. Les fonctionnaires Turcs ont déguerpi. Les Kurdes ont arrêté une caravane et massacré les Arméniens qui la composaient. Situation dangereuse à Van. Le Consul Anglais a dû demander le rappel de Saadeddin Pacha.

Il faudrait, si l'on veut prévenir un massacre, arrêter les Chefs Kurdes compromis, renvoyer les réfugiés dans leurs villages en donnant des garanties pour leur sécurité, désarmer les Arméniens de Van avec les précautions voulues.

Le Commissaire Impérial a fait preuve d'incapacité et de mauvais vouloir. Il faudrait le rappeler.

No. 73.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 346.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 30*, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 335 of the 27th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith corrected copies of Mr. FitzMaurice's Reports from Biredjik, Ourfa, Adiaman, Severek, Behemi, and the neighbourhood of Aleppo, which I have communicated, confidentially, to my colleagues.

I have suggested that the Ambassadors should meet and discuss what steps should be taken with regard to the question of conversions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 74.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 347.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30*, 1896.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 91 of the 7th April, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting on the alleged participation of Greeks in the disturbances in that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 74.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir. *Trebizond, April* 23, 1896.

I AM in receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 13th instant, transmitting copy of a Memorandum from the Greek Chargé d'Affaires in London, wherein objection is taken to my statement that Greeks took part in the disturbances at Trebizond, made in my despatch of the 9th October.

Annexed is a copy of the paragraph found objectionable, and a translation of the one from the "Nea Imera" of Trieste, referred to in the Memorandum. I also subjoin a few lines translated from the Athenian paper, the "Acropolis," giving publicity to some unpleasant and uncalled-for remarks made about me in the Greek Chamber.

Without wishing to make the question a subject of controversy, I should like to submit here, in reply, a few observations that cannot very well be refuted. They must necessarily be of a general character, for, in the absence of conclusive evidence, attainable only through a regularly instituted and publicly conducted investigation, I cannot venture to denounce by name any particular individual, be he Christian or Mahommedan, who during the outbreak behaved shamefully.

I have first to point out that my intention was not to intimate that Greeks took part in the killing. If such is the impression left by a perusal of that passage in my Report, I cannot but express regret at the composition having been on that point ambiguous. In alluding indeed, however vaguely to Greeks, my object was to show that the movement was political and not fanatical, so much so that Turks allowed Christians to join them in the plundering, as well as Persians, who are viewed with sectarian jealousy and prejudice. The omission, moreover, of the article "the" shows that I had no idea of casting blame on the Greek community at large, and as for my having done so on the "Hellenes," a term only applicable to Greek subjects, the absence of the word in the original dispels such a supposition.

That Greeks participated in the looting is unquestionable. Were it otherwise I would have retracted the assertion, then made by me, in one of my subsequent despatches. Much, the authorities say most, of the stolen articles were found in Greek houses, and this up to the end of the search, which lasted five months. Many of them no doubt bought the plunder cheap from the robbers, and thus connived in the pillage; while a few, a very few I hope, took a decidedly active part in the sacking of shops and houses. Two men and a woman of this quarter alone so distinguished themselves on that occasion, and there are others who are greatly suspected.

What number of Greeks aided and abetted the Turks in thievery cannot now be easily ascertained. The stir made by the publication of my statement has put them all on their guard, and the community as a whole has been doing its utmost to conceal the truth. As none but Greeks, however, deny the allegation, it matters little perhaps whether those among them who directly or indirectly shared in the plunder, count in double or treble figures. Suffice it to say that a person of my household recognized two Greeks accompanying the mob; that a member of this Consulate saw three Greek women loaded with spoils, and that thoroughly trustworthy individuals witnessed Greeks entering and looting the shops of Messrs. Arabian, Mahokian, Marimian, Fetvadjian, Hekimian, Odabashian, Anoushian, and Ohanian.

When the quotation in the "Nea Imera" was read at Trebizond, the Greek Bishop, the Greek Consul, and the Greek Notables, felt the shame, but showed no resentment. They at once set about to prove I had been deceived, with unfortunately no success. It however does them honour to have taken up the matter so very warmly, and I told them so in no stinted terms. They wished me to revoke the statement in its entirety. This I declined to do without their proving that the whole town is bearing false testimony against them. In the country, I added, it is alleged that some fifteen Greeks of Kiretchanch, with some thirty Turks of Karlik, sacked the Armenian villages of Delibalta, Anifa, &c. Though murdering and plundering go usually together, I proposed that either the Bishop or the Consul should write to me on the subject, and I would, in my reply, endeavour to mitigate any severe interpretation that could be put on the paragraph written by me at a time of great upset and incertitude. They neither of them ventured to do so, and if, therefore, any erroneous impression as to my meaning still exists, I am not to be suspected of either anti- or pro-Hellenic sentiments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Extract from Consul Longworth's Despatch No. 122 *of October* 9, 1895.

Almost at once hundreds of armed Turks filled the streets, rushing madly about, and slaughtering every Armenian they could meet. The troops it seems joined them at first, and then, aided by Greeks and Persians, they proceeded deliberately and systematically to break open and loot the Armenian houses, shops, and store-rooms throughout the town, killing those who offered the least resistance.

Translation from the "Nea Imera" of February 16 (28), 1896.

From the report of Consul Longworth at Trebizond, the statement worthy of attention, which we hope erroneous, is that "the armed Turks and the soldiers, aided by Hellenes and Persians, began deliberately and systematically, to break open and loot the houses, shops, and warehouses of the Armenians, killing those offering esistance."

Translation from the Parliamentary Intelligence in the "Acropolis" of March 15 (27), 1896.

M. Eftaxias drew attention to the great excitement prevailing among their kinsmen at Trebizond, consequent on the publication of a despatch from a British Consul there, in which he reports that Hellenes took part in the massacre of Armenians. Their kinsmen had hastened to protest against this audacious calumny, but M. Eftaxias thinks that the Government is bound to take the necessary steps to remove the odious slander inspired by the known anti-Hellenic disposition of the Consul, already displayed on other occasions.

M. Skouzes, in answer, said, that no sooner had the British Consul's report been made known, than their Consul had hastened to ask explanations, and received the assurance that it was written on erroneous information. The Ministry, however, were not content with this satisfaction, and instructed their Legation in London to demand that the malevolent statements should be officially annulled.

No. 75.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 348.)
My Lord, *Pera, April* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch dated the 15th April, which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van reporting on the critical state of that vilayet. A telegram from Mr. Williams, dated the 22nd April, states that Saadeddin Pasha has not fulfilled his promises to punish the Kurds, and the latter continue to commit outrages; the Treasury is bankrupt; the Kurds refuse to pay taxes, and the Armenians have no money. Shakir Pasha is the only person who can save the province if he is sent with full powers and not less than 15,000*l.* as a loan to the local Treasury. Mr. Williams ends by saying that, owing to the prevailing insecurity, distress is increasing, and that 20,000 persons require assistance.

I instructed my first Dragoman to communicate the substance of Mr. Williams' reports to the Foreign Minister. Mr. Block's representations were strongly supported by the Russian Dragoman. Tewfik Pasha promised that remedial measures should be taken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE

Inclosure in No. 75.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Van, April* 15, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that the condition of this province remains most serious. Besides the murders already reported, several isolated cases have occurred in the vicinity of the town, the total deaths since the 30th March amounting to thirty-eight. For instance, two Armenian shopkeepers were proceeding to Van from Wastan with some Mahommedans and three Christian tax-collectors—in all eight persons. They (the shopkeepers) were murdered in broad daylight by Wastan Kurds about 4 miles from Van, under circumstances of great brutality. I interrogated one of the Christians in the presence of the Vali. He saw the Kurds who committed the crime, and even talked with them, but stated that he would be unable to identify the men whom the Vali had sent for. He must have known perfectly well, but was afraid to give evidence.

The acting Catholicos of Akhtamar, a most excellent and reasonable ecclesiastic, has just informed me that a large number of men have been circumcised in the district of Gagar, on the borders of the Bitlis Vilayet. The report is probably true, as it is well known that in this and the adjoining district of Khizan very many people have already embraced Islamism. In every direction I hear that the villagers are unable to go out to sow the spring crops for fear of the Kurds. I visited a hamlet about 3 miles from Van; all the people had fled to the town, and are too frightened even to go out and work during the day. It is impossible to exaggerate the state of insecurity which exists outside the town, or the despair and terror of these wretched people.

The Vali does what he can, and too much cannot be said in his praise, but it is impossible for him to protect every village with a handful of cowardly zaptiehs at his disposal, still less can the regular infantry do so. At the best they can protect a few villages, and catch up the murderers after the damage is done. As regards the causes which have thrown this province into a state of anarchy, I am sorry to have to say that there is little doubt that the last attacks on the villages by the Shemsiki Kurds were in revenge for the murder of the soldier (referred to in my despatch No. 8), who it appears was a Kurd. His fellow tribesmen believed that the villages attacked sheltered revolutionaries, and it is probable that they did so. I do not in any way wish to excuse these savages, for whom no punishment would be too severe, but I wish to make clear to your Excellency that it is no ordinary plundering and raiding that has to be dealt with here; and now that persuasion and threats have been tried and found wanting, further outrages can only be stopped by the severest punishments. At the same time, any revolutionaries caught should be punished without mercy. The major portion of the Armenian population sees now the folly of this movement, and it only requires a demonstration of the good faith and power of the Government for their following to rapidly dwindle away.

Allowing even for the poverty and embarrassments of the Government, it should not be difficult to make an example of the Kurds guilty of these crimes, for it must not be supposed that every Kurd is a thief and a murderer. There have been some very bright exceptions. Several Chiefs are entirely opposed to the recent policy, others are more or less undecided. The irreconcilables are neither numerous nor powerful.

Saadeddin Pasha is still out in the Serai district, and I am anxiously expecting news of him. He promised me to punish the authors of the late outrages. So far he has sent in a few sheep, and two small Kurdish Chiefs, who were rescued by their friends not far from the town. I still hope that he will perform his promise, but I am afraid that he, knowing that the revolutionary party is responsible for much that has happened, is inclined to take a lenient view of the actions of these bandits. However, time will show, and if your Excellency has been able to induce His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to send definite orders for the punishment of the authors of these last outrages, all may yet be well. The great danger to be feared here in the immediate future is that the revolutionaries, seeing that nothing is being done, may commit themselves. They are said to be preparing to attack outlying Kurdish villages. If they do so the Kurds will lose all restraint, and nothing can save the Armenian village population.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that something should be done, and that quickly. I have discussed the matter with the Russian Vice-Consul, with whom I am on most friendly terms, and he has agreed to telegraph to his Excellency Count Nélidow, urging him to press for the punishment of the Kurds.

As regards the future outlook, it is most gloomy; there may be gleams of hope, but I can see no prospect of any real improvement in the position of the Christians. Under, at the best, a weak and impoverished Government, they dwell unarmed among lawless and savage tribes who are armed to the teeth with modern weapons. If they are to continue to exist, the villagers must be definitely placed under the protection of certain Chiefs who will be held responsible for their safety, or the Kurds must be disarmed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 76.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 349.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting the state of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Diarbekir, April* 14, 1896.

THE Armenian prisoner Mandaljin, mentioned in my last despatch as having been committed for trial on a capital charge, died suddenly in prison two days ago, of apoplexy it is said. The rest are being gradually examined and committed for trial on various charges tending to implicate them in the late disturbances. No Moslems have yet been convicted in that connection. Hadji Reshid Aga, whom I have mentioned as chiefly responsible for the devastation of the Silouan district, is still at large in the town. The districts in general are quieter now, though no solid improvement can be expected until some sort of justice is done to the various local Aghas and Beys, who terrorize the Christian population.

An Armenian girl, abducted by a Kurd in the district of Lidja some distance to the north, was brought to the town to-day, and declared herself a Christian, and was accordingly restored to her parents. To obtain the surrender of other abducted girls it would be necessary to apply force to the Kurds. It is practically useless to send troops or zaptiehs to look for them, as the Kurds hide them or send them to other villages when the troops appear, or in the case of zaptiehs, resort to bribery. But if some of the Kurds suspected of concealing girls were seized, and the same methods applied to them, as are often applied to Armenians in prison, much better results might be obtained.

Abdullah Pasha, the General who was sent to restore order, suddenly left to-day for Mousul, where disturbances are said to have occurred. Two other officials who came with him, Samih Bey and Rushdi Bey, remain here. He took with him Najif Bey, a member of the "Young Turkey" party, whom I have mentioned before as a disturber of the peace, and a most objectionable young man, and who it is to be hoped will not be allowed to return here. I said before that the departure of Abdullah Pasha would probably be the signal for fresh disturbances, and so it would have been a month ago, but things have so far quieted down now that I should hope there will be no renewal of massacre. I have no confidence in the Vali, but there seems to be a general impression among the Turks that the Government desires a cessation of disturbances, so that unless an active agitation is recommenced by the authors of the former troubles, a continuance of tranquillity may be fairly looked for.

The Government now generally refuses passports to Christians to go to Constantinople or abroad. If the Government put obstacles in the way of travelling, it is very difficult to get away, much more so than from Van or Erzeroum, which are near the Persian or Russian frontiers. Even if they manage to escape from here they are

liable to be stopped at Aleppo, Alexandretta, or elsewhere. It does not seem to be an unreasonable demand that those who wish should be allowed to leave the country, especially as the Government has of late appeared decidedly to favour the reduction of the numbers of the Christians in these parts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 77.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 350. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 336, Confidential, of the 27th April, and my despatches Nos. 25 and 28, Commercial, of the 19th and 25th April respectively, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block respecting the desirability of obtaining the recall of the Vali of the Hedjaz, both in connection with the continued extortions from pilgrims, and his unsatisfactory conduct in regard to the proceedings against the authors of the outrage on the Consuls.

I had instructed Mr. Block to sound his Russian and French colleagues as to how far their Embassies might be disposed to co-operate in pressing the Porte for the dismissal of the Vali.

Your Lordship will observe from the inclosed Memorandum that the Russian Dragoman stated that his Embassy would probably be willing to act with Her Majesty's Embassy in the matter of the Vali's relations with Hassan Daoud and foreign pilgrims, regarding which they had received complaints similar to those made by Mr. Alban.

The French Dragoman is strongly of opinion that we are justified in demanding the recall of Ahmed Ratib Pasha, on account of his inability to give satisfaction for the outrages of last May.

I await your Lordship's instructions before making any proposal for joint action to the French and Russian Embassies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

MR. ACTING CONSUL ALBAN'S Nos. 27 and 28.

I have on two occasions spoken to the Foreign Minister on the subject of the extortions practised upon the British Indian pilgrims. I have pointed out that until the Grand Shereef and the Vali are changed no lasting amelioration can be expected, but as this does not seem feasible, in view of the support extended to these functionaries by the Palace, I urged the Porte to have Hassan Daoud sent out of the country; this last measure was within the competence of the Porte, it was highly necessary, and might afford temporary relief. I pressed for an early reply to the note of Her Majesty's Embassy No. 34 of the 28th March.

I regret to state that even the dismissal and banishment of Hassan Daoud will not be obtained without further pressure.

As for the Grand Shereef; although Mr. Alban insists that until he is changed the extortion will continue, it is impossible to hope for his dismissal; he is related to Said Essad Effendi, the representative in the Palace of the tomb of the Prophet at Medina, who is, perhaps, the most influential religious Sheikh in the Sultan's *entourage*.

The Vali might be changed, but it will require strong pressure. The Russian Dragoman informed me that his Embassy would probably be willing to act with this Embassy in the matter of the Vali and Hassan Daoud, as the complaints they receive are very similar to those of Mr. Alban.

I have spoken also to the French Dragoman with regard to the advisability of pressing for the removal of the Vali on account of his inability to arrest the assailants of the four Consular officers in May last, a year ago.

He is strongly of opinion that we are justified in demanding his recall. Ahmed Ratib Pasha's former tenure of office was discreditable, and we know *confidentially* that his appointment was made by the Palace in spite of the unfavourable report of the Council of Ministers.

The reason given by the Palace for his appointment was that he was on such excellent terms with the Grand Shereef and knew the Arab tribes so well, that he, and he alone, could discover and punish the assailants.

As his mission has now failed signally, his recall could be asked for, but, in my opinion, and that of M. Rouet, the matter should not be finally considered as settled until the authorities at Jeddah have saluted the British, French, and Russian flags.

Force, or a threat of force, would at once settle the question; otherwise we must expect to encounter serious difficulty and delay.

April 29, 1896. (Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

No. 78.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 144.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 4, 1896, 12·25 P.M.*

MY telegram No. 142 of 30th April.

I have instructed the Vice-Consuls of the various vilayets, through which Shakir Pasha will pass, to meet his Excellency at the frontiers of their respective vilayets, and to remain with him for the period of his stay therein. Bulman will meet him at Erzinjan, as we have no Vice-Consul at Erzeroum.

No. 79.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 127.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 6, 1896.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 144 of the 4th May, reporting that you have arranged that during Shakir Pasha's approaching journey in the provinces he shall be met at the frontier of each vilayet by the British Vice-Consul, who will remain with him during his stay.

Your proceedings in this matter have the entire approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 80.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 75. Very Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 7, 1896, 1 P.M.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatches Nos. 336 and 350, Confidential, of the 27th and 30th ultimo respectively, relative to the desirability of taking steps in concert with your French and Russian colleagues with a view to obtain the recall of the Vali of the Hedjaz.

Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would be dangerous at this moment to make any attempt at combined action for the purpose, as it might afford an excuse for inconvenient interference in the Red Sea on the part of the French and Russian Governments.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 81.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 139.) *Foreign Office, May 8, 1896.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 346 of the 30th ultimo, inclosing corrected copies of Mr. Fitzmaurice's Reports on the state of affairs at Biredjik, Urfa, Adiaman, and Severek, and in the neighbourhood of Aleppo.

I approve of your having communicated these papers to your colleagues, and I trust that they will agree to your suggestion, that a meeting of the Ambassadors should be held to discuss the question of forced conversions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 82.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 149.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 9, 1896, 7·30 P.M.*

ON the 7th May a further joint representation was made by the Dragomans of the Embassies respecting the failure of the Porte to fulfil their arrangement respecting Zeitoun, laying special stress on the appointment of a Mussulman Governor, as reported in my telegram No. 141 of the 29th ultimo. They were unable, however, to extract any satisfactory answer from his Excellency.

Mr. Block, pressing for an answer to-day, was informed that the Porte was still considering the matter.

No. 83.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 150.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 10, 1896, 2·10 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Aleppo telegraphs that all is quiet at Sueda, and that fourteen Huntchagist agents were brought from there to Aleppo on the 12th instant.

No. 84.

Sir M. Durand to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 20.) *Tehran, April 15, 1896.*

My Lord,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 20 of the 25th February, 1896, I addressed a note to the Persian Government urging them to adopt such measures as might be in their power for preventing armed incursions across the frontier into Turkish territory and to co-operate in any measures taken by the Turkish authorities to keep the Kurds under proper control.

I have now the honour to inclose translation of a note from the Sadr-i-Azam on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure in No. 84.

The Sadr-i-Azam to Sir M. Durand.

(Translation.) *April 10, 1896.*

IN reply to your Excellency's note of the 3rd April regarding the Armenians and the frontier Kurds of Azerbijan, I have the honour to state that I am much obliged to the British Government for their advice. I think it well to inform you that the Kurds and other frontier tribes of Azerbijan are so minutely watched by the Persian frontier officials, especially since the question of the Turkish Armenians, that, though the Kurdish Chiefs in Turkish territory have repeatedly invited the Persian Kurds to join them in atrocities against the Armenians, they have not dared to do so. This very point will prove to your Excellency to what extent the Persian officials have kept a careful watch over the Persian Kurds, notwithstanding their inherent inclination to commit raids and murders.

With regard to the Armenians residing in the frontier villages, I have to state that the Azerbijan authorities have employed numerous officials at different points on the frontier to keep watch on the actions of the Armenians, and that reports of these officials are received continually. In consequence of the repeated instructions given to the Azerbijan authorities and judging from the reports, I do not think that the Armenians intend making an incursion into Turkish territory.

It cannot be said for certain that no arms are to be found among so many thousand Armenians, but the local officials are of opinion that should some arms be found amongst a few of them these are meant merely for defence against the Kurds. The Chiefs of the Kurdish tribes in Turkey have repeatedly encroached on Kutur with impunity, and have demanded that certain Persian Armenians should be given up to them by the local authorities, stating that if this were done they would encroach no further.

In consequence of these repeated encroachments the local authorities have been obliged to remove the Armenians of Kutur residing in the frontier villages to some other place in order to free them from the constant persecution of the Turkish Kurds.

On the receipt of your Excellency's note, I sent instructions to the Azerbijan authorities to make inquiries into the matter, and should there be any possibility of lawless incursions, to take the necessary steps to prevent them.

(Signed) SADR-I-AZAM.

No. 85.

Consul-General Wood to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 11.)

My Lord, *Tabriz, April 22, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 11th instant, reporting the threatening state of affairs existing on the Turco-Persian frontier, I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter I have received from Dr. Cochrane, of the American Presbyterian Mission in Urumiah, giving further news of the aggressive attitude of the Kurds under Turkish protection.

I have also the honour to inclose the copy of a translation of a letter I thought it expedient to address the Karguzar, or Agent for Foreign Affairs in Tabriz, on the receipt of the above-mentioned communication.

From what I gather the Tabriz authorities have slowly awakened to the exigencies and responsibilities of the situation, for two regiments and field-pieces have been ordered to proceed to the Plain of Salmas, and other parts of the frontier, and the Vali Ahd is even said to contemplate accompanying this force.

As usual, before troops can be moved in these parts, a certain amount of delay is inevitable; for arrears of pay due to the military have to be settled in some way or another, and large allowances given to the higher officials.

In the event of the Armenians of Haftevan and the other villages in the Plain of Salmas, who are, according to all reports, well-armed, not allowing themselves to be hurried into some rash demonstration by the revolutionary agents who are amongst them,* and await the coming of whatever forces are dispatched from Tabriz, it is

* Some twelve of these men left Tabriz for Salmas on the 20th instant.—C. G. W.

possible the Kurds will refrain from their intended raid, but, as too much reliance cannot be placed upon the prudence of the Armenians or the promptitude of the Persians, it is to be feared that the mountaineers will make a determined dash for the enormous spoil to be obtained in the rich and prosperous districts lying below them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

Dr. Cochrane to Consul-General Wood.

Urumiah, April 10, 1896.

Dear Sir,

WE have just received a letter from Salmas (Dr. Wright) which states that there seems to be a considerable danger of an attack on that place by the Kurds. The report is current that the Albak Chiefs have sent to the Shekoik Chief, Memad Agha, asking him to join them in an attack on Salmas, especially on the village of Haftevan, which has the reputation of harbouring the Armenian Nationalists who have been sending aid to the Armenians of Turkey.

In a professional call on the Governor this morning, I remarked that I had such news from Salmas, and he said: "Why shouldn't the Kurds come down upon Salmas; what is to hinder? They are fools if they don't, when there is nothing, absolutely, to prevent them from helping themselves to all the spoils that that district contains."

He said that he had been writing for the last six months to Tabriz, urging upon the authorities the necessity of having the border well protected this spring, but he said, "Who cares? The authorities are perfectly indifferent." I myself do not think there is much danger of any very serious attack very soon, unless several conditions come about which as yet are not present, but I do know that if the border [? remains] as it is now, we are sure to have much trouble

I felt that I would call your attention to this matter if it has not already been drawn to it, so that you can use your influence, if thought best, to secure protection to this whole border that needs special care this season.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. P. COCHRANE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

Consul-General Wood to the Agent for Foreign Affairs at Tabriz.

Tabriz, April 17, 1896.

(Translation.)

IT has come to my knowledge through reliable sources that there is considerable danger of an attack upon the villages in the Plain of Salmas, of which the principal one is Haftevan by the Kurds.

For some time past rumours have reached me that the Kurdish Chiefs on the frontier have been arming with the intention of attack, and these rumours have been confirmed by the reports which have reached me since, for it now seems that the Albak Chiefs have sent messages to Memad Agha, Chief of the Mamash, asking him to join them in their raids on Persian territory.

I have thought it my duty to warn you of what I know, especially as the welfare and safety of English and American subjects might be endangered by any armed attack against the Armenian and Nestorian populations in the Plains of Salmas.

My informants state that it is known that the Governor-General of Urumiah has often written to the Tabriz authorities during the past year, bringing to their knowledge the dangers threatening Salmas, and urging the necessity of having the border protected, but that nothing so far has been done.

I beg that you will bring this to the knowledge of his Imperial Highness the Vali Ahd, that his Imperial Highness may take the necessary measures to protect the property and lives, not only of the loyal Christian subjects of His Imperial Majesty

the Shah, but the property and lives of peaceful subjects of other friendly Powers living in those parts, and by so doing avoid serious responsibilities.

(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

No. 86.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 356.)

My Lord,

Pera, May 5, 1896.

IN transmitting herewith Sir M. Durand's despatch to your Lordship No. 29 of 15th April respecting incursions of Persian Kurds into Turkish territory, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I am communicating to the Sublime Porte the substance of the despatch in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 87.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 357.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the arrival of Mr. Hampson at Bitlis, the expulsion of Mr. Knapp, and the desire of the Armenians to emigrate

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 87.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir,

Erzeroum, April 22, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, announcing his arrival there on the 3rd instant.

Mr. Hampson also reports the expulsion of the Rev. G. Knapp from Bitlis, and describes the situation there as one of great uneasiness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 87.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Graves.

Sir,

Bitlis, April 6, 1896.

IN accordance with instructions received from Her Majesty's Embassy, I left Moush on the 1st, and arrived here on the 3rd instant.

I found that Mr. Knapp had been captured by the Government on the previous Sunday, 29th March. Though no actual force was used, a considerable number of soldiers were sent early that morning to conduct him out of the town. Under these circumstances, and as the Vali told him that, if he refused to go, the authorities would not answer for the consequences, and considering the risk to the ladies and children of an attack which was threatened by the fanatical Sheikhs, &c., who are so numerous here, Mr. Knapp thought it best to submit. The orders to his escort and on his passport were that he was to be taken to Alexandretta, and thence sent out of the country. Mr. Cole, with his family and that of Mr. Knapp, are still here.

I asked the Vali how this action was to be reconciled with the promises made by the Porte to the American Legation, that Mr. Knapp should stay till the end of April. Esmer Bey said that his orders were to act on his own discretion in the matter, and that he considered Mr. Knapp a dangerous person, and his presence here a source of danger to all.

I find that great uneasiness still prevails here. The Vali seems to be completely under the influence of the most fanatical of the Mussulmans. The majority of the Armenians would gladly emigrate to Persia or elsewhere if the Government would allow it. They have lost everything, have no work, and are utterly panic-stricken and hopeless. Under present circumstances, I venture strongly to urge that at least liberty should be secured for all those who wish to leave the country to do so.

I have had the honour to telegraph the sense of the above despatch to Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—The Vali has not returned my visit, and, by his orders, all my newspapers, &c., have been opened at post-office, and such as were declared obnoxious destroyed. On my written protest he repeated his order, but declined to give it me in writing.

C. S. H.

No. 88.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 358.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, reporting that hostilities have broken out between two tribes of the Yemén, and that the road between Hodeidah and Sanaa is unsafe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 88.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

Jeddah, April 15, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Vice-Consul Ahmed, reporting that hostilities have broken out between two tribes of the Yemén, and that the road between Hodeidah and Sanaa is unsafe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 88.

Vice-Consul Ahmed to Acting Consul Alban.

Hodeidah, March 31, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that about a week ago two Arab tribes near Hajja fought with each other, and one tribe killed eight of the other.

Now the road between Hodeidah and Sanaa is not safe. The camels with provisions for soldiers at Sanaa have been intercepted on their way by the Arabs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. U. AHMED.

No. 89.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 360.)
My Lord, *Pera, May* 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum drawn up by Mr. Block, giving information received from the Porte with regard to the theft of cattle by Kurds in Hekkiari Sandjak, which was communicated to him by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I HAVE the honour to report that a communication has been received by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the effect that about twenty Kurds of the tribe of Milan, in the Sandjak of Hekkiari, have stolen the cattle and household effects of the Armenian village of Conzonldja, in the Nahié of Erdjik.

The robbers were pursued by mounted zaptiehs, and their booty was recaptured and restored to the owners. In reporting this incident to the Porte, the Vali of Van adds that the assailants had made good their escape, and that one of the zaptiehs had been wounded. The Minister of the Interior had thereupon sent orders that gendarmes, and, if necessary, even soldiers, should be sent against the guilty parties wherever they might be, and to take all the requisite steps to capture them at any cost.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

No. 90.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 362.)
My Lord, *Pera, May* 7, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Minister of the Interior has informed me, confidentially, that the Nestorians had raided a Kurdish village in the Hekkiari, had killed several of the inhabitants, and had turned the mosque into a church.

I have inquired of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van whether he has any information to confirm this statement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 91.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 364.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 7, 1896.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 88 of the 2nd March, and No. 107 of the 19th March, respecting the arrests of suspected Armenian revolutionists in the district of Moush, I have the honour to report that I have received a telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, stating that sentences have been passed on twelve Armenians as revolutionists.

Of these seven have been condemned to death or imprisonment for life, the remainder, including the priest Vartan, have been condemned to terms of imprisonment varying from twelve years to six months.

I have drawn the attention of the Porte to the severity of these condemnations, and have represented to them the very bad effect that will be produced if the capital sentences are carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 92.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 365.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 7, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting on the state of that vilayet.

I have called the attention of the Porte to the proceedings of the Kurds in Silonan, and have brought to their notice the names of the Chiefs designated by Mr. Hallward as especially dangerous.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 92.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Diarbekir, April 21, 1896.*

I BELIEVE the majority of the forced converts to Mahommedanism have now returned to Christianity. The Kaïmakam of Chermook lately went to Chinkoosh and called the Christians to the church, and had the turbans which they had been forced to wear taken off. His action produced a good impression.

On the other hand, I still hear complaints from Palou. Ibrahim Bey, whom I have before mentioned, is now having the fields which he has taken from the people of Kapon-Achmaz cultivated on his own account. At Zet, in the same district, some Christians were also forced to go before the Tribunal and declare that they had sold their fields to some of the Kurdish Beys. I mentioned these and other cases to the Vali, and he said the Mutessarif of Maden had gone to Palou, and would inquire into them. It remains to be seen whether anything will be done.

In Silonan a good many of the forced converts remain Turk through fear. The condition of that district is wretched in the extreme. About 10,000 destitute Christians are massed in the villages of Farkin, Hajija, and Hashtar; they are afraid to go back to their villages, which, indeed, are mostly burnt, but if they were sure of security they could at least return to reap the harvest, which will be ripe in two or three months' time. The Kurds of that district were largely concerned in the Talori affair; finding that no result ensued from the Commission of Inquiry, and that they were sure of impunity, they repeated their performances in the Silonan district a year later. It is, therefore, felt that there is little security for their remaining quiet in the future. In order to restore to the Christians their means of living, it would be necessary to force the Kurds to give back at least some of their stolen property, and to make an example of some of the Chiefs, especially Hadji Reshid Aga, Hakki Bey, Sadik Bey, and Muharrem Bey. The two former are at liberty in Diarbekir. Sadik Bey is in prison; Muharrem Bey, who is known to have killed many Armenians with his own hand, was sent for by Government from Farkin, but did not come.

The Assistant Governor, in a conversation I had with him, alluded to Jemil Pasha, whom I have previously mentioned (in my despatch No. 2 of 17th March to Erzeroum) as a person whose removal from the town is very necessary to secure tranquillity. He is a fanatical man, and has great influence with the Kurds. Hadji Reshid Aga is his guest. He took a prominent part in stirring up the disturbances of last November.

In any case, some very much more decided measures than the Government appears inclined to take are required to restore any sort of confidence or hope to the Christian population, a large proportion of which would emigrate at once if assured of a safe exit from the country.

The distribution of relief was suspended everywhere for about three weeks, owing

to the local authorities having received orders to distribute it only by means of a Committee appointed *ad hoc* by them. Lately, however, fresh orders have been received to allow the distribution, subject only to the supervision of one person sent on behalf of the Government, and it is to be hoped that the work will proceed more smoothly now. I have just had lists of destitute persons made for this district only, which amount to more than 10,000. The numbers here tend to increase, owing to the difficulties made by the local authorities in the outlying districts to the distribution of relief, in consequence of which the peasants crowd into the town in the hope of finding charity. I have called the attention of the Vali to this matter.

Yusef Effendi Yonan, who was sent by Mr. Andrus from Mardin to Redvan to distribute relief, and who was imprisoned by Bahram Pasha, Mutessarif of Sairt (in Bitlis Vilayet), has been sent back to Mardin. Mr. Andrus proposes to send some one else in his place, as it appears there is considerable need in that district also.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 93.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 366.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 7, 1896.*

THE Ambassadors met yesterday, on my suggestion, at the Austrian Embassy to discuss the question of the conversions at Biredjik.

I had previously communicated to them Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatch, giving the results of the inquiries made by the two Turkish Commissioners and by himself into the matter.

Mr. Fitzmaurice has now, at my request, drawn up the accompanying Memorandum suggesting the measures which should, in his opinion, be taken to restore confidence and thus enable the converts gradually to return to Christianity.

Shortly stated, these suggestions are:—

1. That the troops now stationed at Biredjik should be withdrawn and replaced by regulars:—

2. That some high functionaries should be sent to Biredjik with full powers to take measures for the restoration of confidence.

3. That the leaders of the massacre of the 1st January, 1896, should be punished or banished.

4. That one or more foreign Delegates should accompany the Ottoman functionaries.

The above arrangements would, Mr. Fitzmaurice thinks, be followed by the re-conversion of a certain portion of the Biredjik Armenians, and the nucleus of a Christian community would thus be re-established, which would afford the other converts an opportunity of eventually returning to their old faith.

Such a measure would, no doubt, produce a salutary effect in other places where similar conversions have taken place.

Mr. Fitzmaurice has, since his return, had interviews with the Grand Vizier, the Foreign Minister, and the Sultan's First Secretary, and has informed them of the results of the inquiry and of the opinions he has formed.

I called upon Tewfik Pasha three days ago, and after urging upon him the necessity of some measures being taken to satisfy public opinion on this question, I stated informally the steps which I considered advisable. I requested him to press the subject on the consideration of the Sultan and of his Government, and to inform me as soon as possible, of the decisions that may be taken. I at the same time stated my readiness to send Mr. Fitzmaurice again to Birejik if his presence would facilitate a satisfactory settlement.

At the Ambassadors' meeting yesterday I communicated Mr. Fitzmaurice's suggestions, and the steps I had taken respecting them, and asked my colleagues whether they were prepared to join in pressing upon the Sultan any proposals for remedying the very serious state of things revealed by the inquiry of the Commission. I pointed out that the conversions at Biredjik were stated in a formal document signed by the Ottoman Commissioners to have taken place through terror, and any representations we might make would therefore be based on absolutely unimpeachable

evidence, and not as in some other cases on reports which could be contradicted by the Turkish authorities.

M. de Nélidoff, who had previously promised me his support, stated that at an audience granted to him yesterday morning by the Sultan on his approaching departure on leave of absence, he had spoken to His Majesty of the conversions.

The Sultan, in reply, had simply denied that any had taken place, and had requested M. de Nélidoff to send his Dragoman to the palace, when he would be shown all the reports that had been received, and would see that his information was incorrect. The Ambassador did not think it desirable at that moment to continue the discussion.

M. de Nélidoff said that, in his opinion, the British Ambassador stood, as regards Biredjik, on a different footing from his colleagues, as a British Vice-Consul alone had been invited by the Sultan to take part in the inquiry. He thought therefore that the best plan would be that I should make representations to the Porte and that the other Ambassadors should support them. He, for his part, would be most happy to do so.

The Austrian Ambassador concurred, but suggested that any representation made by the Ambassadors should be only in general terms, and that the steps to be taken should be left entirely to the judgment of the Porte.

After some discussion, it was agreed that I should call upon the Foreign Minister to-day, and should urge upon him the main points of Mr. Fitzmaurice's proposals, namely, the removal of the troops that participated in the massacres, and the despatch of functionaries with the mission of restoring confidence, and that I should communicate the results to my colleagues, who would then, either personally or by their Dragomans, give me their support.

The German Ambassador was not present, having gone on a trip to Broussa, but the Austrian Ambassador was authorized by him to say that he would concur in any decision that might be taken.

I may add that the Russian Ambassador seems more disposed to take up the question of conversions than my other colleagues.

2. The French Ambassador's interest appears to be limited to cases where Roman Catholics are concerned, and the Representatives of the Triple Alliance are inclined to leave matters alone.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 93.

Memorandum by Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice.

THE result of the Biredjik Commission, on which I had the honour to represent Her Majesty's Government, having established that the Armenians there became Mussulmans under the influence of terror, and can only return to Christianity on the restoration of confidence, I have the honour to submit to your Excellency what I consider to be the proper measures to be taken to secure that end.

I would beg first to set forth the arguments which, in my opinion, would have most weight:

(*a.*) With the Sultan's Government.
(*b.*) With the European Powers.

(*a.*) *With the Sultan's Government.*

(1.) That as conversions through fear are absolutely opposed to the teaching of the Mussulman religious law, it is essential, in the interests of Islam, that a remedy should be found for this ugly question, a result which is heartily desired by enlightened Mussulmans in the provinces.

(2.) That, as the proper remedy is the restoration of confidence, and as the destruction of that confidence, resulting from recent troubles, has brought trade to a standstill, and thereby caused a falling off in the local revenues, it is most desirable, in the interests of the Ottoman Government, that confidence should be restored, that trade should thus revive, and the Government receipts be again brought up to their former level.

(3.) That these wholesale conversions through terror to Islamism in Turkey will produce an exceedingly bad impression in foreign countries, and especially among the Mussulman population of Russia, France (Algiers), England, Egypt, and India.

(*b.*) *With European Powers.*

(1.) Altogether apart from the varying degree of interest which the different European Governments may have in getting order restored in the Anatolian provinces of the Sultan's dominions, the interests of humanity demand that a remedy should be found for this question, which is the outcome of recent troubles in Anatolia, though quite distinct from their other features of massacre and pillage.

(2.) Christendom as a whole, and especially Governments like those of England, France, and Russia, which have also large Mussulman populations, cannot regard this conversion question unconcernedly.

(3.) France, in particular, which claims the right to protect Oriental Catholics (a large number of whom are included in the new converts), and has exercised, especially in 1860, a beneficial protecting influence in Syria, might be expected to take a warmer interest in the question of conversions at Biredjik, which is so close to Syria.

The Birejik question, though only a small part of the general conversion question, has a special importance from the fact that the participation of a foreign Delegate in the Commission of Inquiry there gives the European Powers, and especially Great Britain, an official basis for further action in the whole question, and I am convinced that if the Biredjik question could be satisfactorily solved, the conversion questions in the neighbouring districts would gradually settle themselves.

I shall now endeavour to reduce to a concrete form the general suggestions which I had the honour to make in my Report from Biredjik of the 5th March:—

1. The reserve troops now stationed at Biredjik, who were present at, where they did not actually participate in, recent disorders, should be replaced as soon as possible by regulars.

2. His Majesty the Sultan should then dispatch there a body of functionaries, composed of a military man, of at least the rank of General of Division (Ferik), a judicial functionary (my colleague on the Commission, Mustapha Nedim, would not be an unsuitable person), a Mussulman religious dignitary, who would, in the mosque and out of it, give the necessary advice to the local Mussulman population, and, lastly, an Armenian Ecclesiastic. The sending of an Armenian Ecclesiastic is not perhaps a *sine quâ non* and is open to certain objections, as the Mussulman functionaries might prefer to attend to the matter without the interference of a "rayah." The Ottoman Government might add other officials to the above, if it wished to lend additional importance to the Mission.

They should have ample, if not full powers to take such measures as would restore the lost confidence of the Armenians in their Government, the minimum of which I would consider to be the power to exile some of the leading Mussulmans who fomented the disorder there of the 1st January, 1896.

The presence of one or more foreign Delegates, or their participation in the proceedings of such a Mission, would be most desirable if not essential. The other European Governments would probably have no special desire to be severally represented, and in that case a British Delegate would suffice, especially as Her Majesty's Government was the only Government represented on the Commission of Inquiry in February last.

Such action of the Ottoman Government would probably be followed by the return to Christianity of a certain portion of the Biredjik Armenians, and a Christian community having been thus re-established in that town (there is not now a single declared Christian there) the greater part of the remaining Armenians would gradually find means of returning to their old faith. It would, moreover, have the effect of restoring the confidence of the Armenian converts to Islam all over the Aleppo region.

If His Majesty the Sultan cannot be induced to seriously adopt the above measures, there remains the alternative of allowing the new converts to gradually filter out of their native places to distant towns, where they are unknown and can practise Christianity. At present, in virtue of orders from the Ministry of the Interior, Armenians who, owing to recent disorders, have migrated from one town to another, *i.e.*, from Biredjik to Aleppo, are sought out by local authorities and obliged to return to their native places; *i.e.*, converts who have fled to Aleppo where they profess Christianity are obliged to return to Biredjik and resume the practice of Islamism.

The Central Government should rescind the above orders, and send general confidential instructions to the Provincial Governments not to interfere with converts, who thus seek, at the price of abandoning their property, to re-embrace Christianity.

(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

No. 94.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 151.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 13, 1896, 11·30 A.M.*

THE British Consul at Aleppo telegraphed this morning that the Aintab Armenian prisoners, thirty-one in number, were released to-day from the Aleppo Gaol.

No. 95.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 155.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 15, 1896, 10·45 A.M.*

MY despatch No. 364 of 7th May.

British Vice-Consul at Mush has telegraphed reporting the death yesterday of the leader of the prisoners, who is said to have been most cruelly treated.

No. 96.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 132.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 15, 1896.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 364 of the 7th instant, reporting that, on hearing from Mr. Vice-Consul Hampson that seven Armenians had been sentenced to death at Mush and five others to terms of imprisonment, you had called the attention of the Porte to the severity of the sentences and to the bad effect which would be produced if the capital sentences were carried out.

I approve your Excellency's action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 97.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Wood.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 15, 1896.*

LORD SALISBURY has received your despatch No. 14 of the 22nd ultimo relative to the threatening attitude of the Kurds on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I am directed by his Lordship to express his approval of your action in writing to inform the Karguzar of the intelligence which had reached you, and to warn him that disturbances were to be apprehended on the frontier.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 98.

Foreign Office to M. Metaxa.

Dear M. Metaxa, *Foreign Office, May 15, 1896.*

LORD SALISBURY desires me to forward to you the inclosed Memorandum containing Mr. Longworth's reply as to the statement made in his Report of the massacres at Trebizond, that certain Greeks had aided the troops in plundering the Armenian houses.

You will see that Mr. Longworth explains that he had never intended to suggest that the Greeks in question had taken any part in massacring the Armenians, and further, that in speaking of Greeks he did not mean to indicate Greek subjects. He maintains, however, that some persons of Greek race did take part in the plundering, and he gives grounds for his statement, which it seems difficult to dispute.

Lord Salisbury does not think that the statement can be considered as affecting the general reputation of the Greek community at Trebizond, or as affording any reasonable ground for remonstrance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

Inclosure in No. 98.

Memorandum.

THE Memorandum communicated by the Greek Chargé d'Affaires on the 2nd April last, complaining of a statement made by Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, in his despatch of the 9th October, 1895, in regard to the conduct of the Greeks during the massacre at Trebizond, was referred to the Consul for his observations, which have now been received.

The passage in which the statement complained of appears is as follows:—

"Almost at once hundreds of armed Turks filled the streets, rushing madly about, and slaughtering every Armenian they could meet. The troops, it seems, joined them at first, and then, aided by Greeks and Persians, they proceeded deliberately and systematically to break open and loot the Armenian houses, shops, and store-rooms throughout the town, killing those who offered the least resistance."

Mr. Longworth states that he did not mean that Greeks took part in the *killing*. He expresses his regret if the passage is ambiguous on this point.

His object in alluding to Greeks was, he says, to show that the movement was political and not fanatical, so much so that Turks allowed Christians to join them in the plundering as well as Persians, who are viewed with sectarian jealousy and prejudice. The omission of the article "the" before the word "Greeks" shows that he had no idea of casting blame on the Greek community at large. The article in the "Nea Imera," referred to in the Memorandum communicated by M. Metaxas, quotes Mr. Longworth as having made use of the term "Hellenes," which is applicable only to Greek subjects. The word used was, however, "Greeks."

Mr. Longworth maintains that his statement that Greeks took part in the plundering is correct, although, in the absence of conclusive evidence, which could only be obtained by a regularly instituted and publicly conducted investigation, he cannot venture to denounce particular individuals by name.

The authorities state, he says, that most of the articles stolen were found in the houses of Greeks, and this up to the end of the search, which lasted five months. Many of these Greeks bought the articles cheap from the persons who had stolen them, and thus connived at the pillage, while a few took an active part in the sacking of shops and houses.

From Mr. Longworth's quarter alone two Greek men and a woman are known to have participated in the plundering, and there are others who are strongly suspected of having done so. A person of Mr. Longworth's household recognized two Greeks accompanying the mob, a member of the Consulate saw three Greek women loaded

with plunder, and thoroughly trustworthy individuals saw Greeks entering and looting the shops of Messrs. Arabian, Mahokian, Marimian, Fetvadjian, Hekimian, Odabashian, Anoushian, and Ohanian.

No. 99.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 159.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 17, 1896, noon.*

MR. BULMAN has telegraphed from Erzinjian that Shakir Pasha is having each one of the condemned Armenians examined separately, and that Shakir is going back direct without going to Sivas.

The Vice-Consul returns on Monday next to Sivas.

No. 100.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 135.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 17, 1896.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 321 of the 22nd ultimo, forwarding one from Mr. Vice-Consul Hampson, reporting the dismissal of Féham Pasha from his post as Mutessarif of Mush.

Her Majesty's Government have received this information with regret, as in previous despatches Mr. Hampson has spoken of that official in terms of commendation, and has eulogized the energy and justice which have marked his administration.

There seems little doubt that it is mainly owing to his conduct of affairs that Mush has been preserved from serious disorders, similar to those which have occurred elsewhere in Asia Minor, and Her Majesty's Government cannot but fear that his dismissal will act as an encouragement to the more unruly and turbulent element among the population.

I request your Excellency to take an opportunity of speaking in the above sense to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and of endeavouring to elicit a distinct statement of the causes which have led to Féham Pasha's removal from his post.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 101.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury—(Received May 18.)

(No. 367.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 307 of the 21st April, I have the honour to report that Mr. Block has continued to attend the meetings of the Reform Commission, and to urge, with the assistance of the First Dragoman of the French Embassy, the execution of the various Articles of the Schedule.

I inclose a report of what passed on the last occasion when the Dragomans were present, which shows that the Commission are giving a fair amount of attention to their duties, and that some small progress may be hoped for in the matter of reforms.

I am sending a Circular, of which copy is inclosed, to the Consular officers instructing them to report on the subject, and inclosing a paper of queries, which, when filled up, will show exactly how matters stand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 101.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I HAVE twice attended the Commission of Control since my last Report No. 213 of the 17th April.

The President had promised me further information, but upon applying, together with my French colleague, the Commission raised a question as to how far they were justified in giving information. This difficulty seems now to have been overcome, and the President has now explained to me the exact state of each Article. I regret, however, that I have little to add to my former Report.

Article 2.—It has not been decided to name any Assistants to Mutessarifs or Kaïmakams. The matter is still under discussion.

Articles 3—5.—The question of Christian Kaïmakams in proportion to the Christian population has not yet been settled, and the Commission has as yet refused to admit that the view of the three Embassies with regard to proportion of Christians in public administration is correct; the matter is still under discussion, but I venture to submit that the matter should be clearly established in a note to the Porte or otherwise as you deem fit.

With regard to police and gendarmerie, the President informs me that correspondence is continuing with Shakir Pasha and the Governors-General of the six vilayets.

Article 6. "Conseils des Sandjaks et des Cazas."—The Commission is awaiting reports from Shakir Pasha and the Valis.

Articles 7—16. "Nahiés."—Shakir Pasha and the Valis are working at this matter.

Articles 17—18. "Conseils des Anciens."—The Commission has again pressed the Minister of Justice to attend to this.

Article 19.—The reports of the Judicial Inspectors which should be furnished to the Commission not having arrived the Commission has again called the attention of the Ministry of Justice to this point.

Article 20. Police.—At Sivas and Erzeroum the reorganized force exists on paper; it is not known if it is in working order. At Kharput and Diarbekir the reorganization is being taken in hand—on paper.

Article 24. "Gardes Champêtres."—This matter is being attended to but cannot be settled until the Nahiés are constituted.

Article 25. "Prisons et Enquête Préliminaire."—Shakir Pasha has been instructed to look into this matter, and the Ministry of Justice has again been written to on the subject.

Article 26. "Comités d'Enquête Préliminaire."—Ditto, ditto.

Article 27. "Contrôle des Kurdes."—Measures are being taken to carry out this Article.

Article 28. "Cavalerie Hamidié."—The Commission is in correspondence with Shakir Pasha.

The Ministry of Justice has been requested to see that the Hamidiehs are amenable to the ordinary Courts of Law.

Article 29 "Titres de Propriété."—Commissions have been formed in the vilayet centres; instructions have been sent to ascertain what they are doing.

Articles 30—31.—The matter is under discussion.

Annex IV. Hadjin and Zeitoun.—The Commission has not yet admitted that Christian Kaïmakams have to be appointed to these cazas.

The observations I made on Article 3 apply to this point also.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

May 6, 1896.

Inclosure 2 in No. 101.

Circular addressed to Her Majesty's Consuls in Turkey.

Sir, *Constantinople, May 8, 1896.*

IN order to facilitate the transmission of full and regular reports of the progress made in carrying out the reforms, I have had a paper of questions drawn up, of which copies are inclosed herewith, showing the heads under which information should be given.

I have to request you to furnish me with the answers to these questions at your earliest convenience. You should also continue from time to time to report further particulars in a similar form.

I rely on your assistance in maintaining constant pressure on the Vali and the local authorities in regard to the execution of the reforms.

Shakir Pasha, who is charged with the supervision of them, has left Erzeroum on a tour of inspection, and may be expected shortly to visit your vilayet. You should avail yourself of this opportunity to lay before him any complaints as to neglect in the due execution of the reforms, and you should furnish him with such advice and information on the subject as may appear desirable.

I am, &c.

Inclosure 3 in No. 101.

Paper of Questions.

Article 1.—*Christian Moavins.*

HAVE the newly-appointed Christian Moavins taken up their duties?

Are they intrusted with the management of affairs as laid down in the "Règlement sur l'Administration des Vilayets?"

What impression has their appointment created (1) among Moslems; (2) among Christians? What are their relations with the Valis and the officials?

Article 2.

Have any Moavins been appointed to Mussulman Mutessarifs and Kaïmakams?

Articles 3 and 4.

Amongst the new Kaïmakams appointed since the issue of the scheme of reforms, are there any that do not fulfil the requirements of these Articles?

Are any Christian Kaïmakams to be appointed in your district? In what cazas do you consider that they would be most useful?

Article 5.

How far has this Article been put into practical execution?

Article 6.

Has any progress been made as regards the "Conseils des Sandjaks et Cazas?" What are the results of Shakir Pasha's inquiries?

Articles 7 to 16.—*Nahiés.*

What steps are being taken to put into force the reformed system of nahiés?

Article 17.

Have any "Conseils des Anciens" been constituted?

Article 19.

What have the judicial inspectors done since their arrival?

How far have they cleared the prisons, and do many prisoners remain untried in your district?

What reforms have been introduced in the staff and general state of the prisons?

Are the inspections promised in this Article faithfully carried out?

Articles 21 and 22.

How far have these Articles been executed? What are the numbers of the newly-organized police, and how many Christians are employed?

Articles 22 and 23.

How far have these Articles been executed? Have any Armenians applied for service in the police and gendarmerie?

Article 24.

What probability is there of this Article being applied?

Article 25.

What is the state of the prisons and of the "maisons d'arrêt?"

Are the regulations provided for by this Article executed?

Article 26.

What measures have been taken to enforce the application of this Article?

Article 27.

Has any progress been made with regard to the control of the Kurds?

What practical measures has Shakir Pasha taken or proposed to take?

Are the regulations with regard to "feuilles de route" and "port d'armes" universally applied?

Article 28.

Do the Hamidieh still carry their arms and wear their uniforms or badges when not on service? Have they been summoned to serve this year? Do the judicial, civil, and military authorities recognize that the Hamidieh are amenable to local ordinary Tribunals?

Article 29.

Have Commissions been formed for the revision of title deeds?

Article 30.

Are gendarmes and policemen still employed to collect the taxes? and when is it likely that special agents will be appointed?

Article 31.

Are any steps being taken for the application of this Article?

Annex 1.—*High Commissioner.*

Is Shakir Pasha at all hampered by the military or civil authorities?

Does his Moavin render him the assistance necessary in laying before him the grievances of the various populations, or is he simply supposed to give his opinion when asked?

Annex 2.—*Amnesty.*

Are any persons who should have benefited by the Amnesty still detained in prison?

Annex 3.—*Return of Emigrants.*

Have you any observations to make on this subject?

Annex 4.—*Aleppo and Adana.*

Are the reforms in any way applied to Zeitoun and Hadjin?

No. 102.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 18.)

(No. 366.) *Pera, May* 9, 1896.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 55 of the 4th March, and my despatch No. 238 of the 25th March, respecting the alleged seizure and appropriation by the Turkish tax-collectors of funds distributed for the relief of distressed Armenians, I have the honour to inform your Lordship, that in answer to my enquiries, I have now received a telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, stating that he has verified many cases in which the funds distributed for relief have been appropriated by the authorities for taxes in the villages of Sheibagi, Mouri, and Itchmali. Her Majesty's Vice-Consul made strong representations to the Vali, who demanded that the individuals in question should be confronted with him. Mr. Fontana states that this will be done, and adds that stringent measures are required to bring this abuse to an end. I have brought the matter to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who promised that inquiry should be made.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 103.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 18.)

(No. 370. Confidential.) *Constantinople, May* 11, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus respecting the increasing control of the Russian Consulate over Greek schools in Damascus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 103.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13. Confidential.)

Sir, *Damascus, April* 23, 1896.

IN 1892 I had the honour to report to Her Majesty's Ambassador the fact of the election of the Greek Patriarch Spiridon to succeed Mgr. Gerasimos in the Patriarchal Chair of Antioch at Damascus, and, in addition, to animadvert on the dissensions which ensued between the Patriarch and the Greek orthodox community. This election, brought about, as it is impossible to doubt, by wholesale corruption of the Bishops, was a victory for the Hellenic party, which, as a rule, makes common cause with the adherents of Russia.

It was natural to suppose, therefore, that his Beatitude would have opposed to the best of his ability any extension of Russian influence in his Patriarchate, but his character is so feeble and his reputation is so low that I am scarcely surprised to learn that under his auspices the Russians have made an important step forward towards obtaining the control of the educational work of the Greek orthodox community in Damascus and its surrounding district.

Last autumn the Russian Dragoman had been apparently attempting to intrigue with this object in view, with the result that the Patriarch complained to the Vali that the Russian Consulate was interfering in his concerns. The Vali was incensed, and very strained relations existed for some little time between the Russian Consulate and the Vali and the Patriarch.

Means were found, however, to induce the Vali to take another view of the question, and shortly afterwards a pacific arrangement was made with the Greek Patriarch (who is notorious for his covetousness) by which the Russian Consulate obtained absolute control over the large Greek orthodox female school in Damascus, and for the future this school will be administered and financed by Russian agents. This is, however, the thin end of the wedge, and the Russian Consul hopes shortly to extend his protection over all the other Greek female schools in the neighbourhood of this city. From that to taking charge of the boys' school is an easy transition. The native Greek community is not best pleased, as they prefer to control the education of their own children; but they are divided amongst themselves, and cannot agree upon any plan of action. Consequently, the Patriarch deals with these matters as he chooses.

The Russian Government approved highly of the Consul's action, sending him an official letter of thanks and a decoration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. C. A. EYRES.

No. 104.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 18.)

(No. 372.)

My Lord, *Pera, May* 11, 1896.

HER Majesty's Embassy were informed by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush on the 26th ultimo that summonses were being served on certain Notables and other Armenians, to the number of 200, in consequence of the murder of a Kurd, which took place two years ago, during an affray at Sasoun. Those men who did not answer to their summons were to be condemned by default, and to be pursued and killed wherever met. The Mutessarif of Moush had further intimated to the Armenians of Sasoun and Talori, that they would be called upon to pay taxes out of the relief funds distributed to them. I brought this information to the notice of the Sublime Porte, by whom inquiries on the subject were instituted.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs now informs me that a telegram has been received from the Vali of Bitlis to the following effect:—

"Previous to the events of Sasoun, some eighteen persons belonging to the village of Shenik, Semal and Gheliegnzan had been accused of having attacked the tents of Vighanli Alori, and others of having killed a certain Eumer Temou Redjeb and a woman named Kekhoui, and stolen their property.

"These men were condemned by default, and, according to rule, the notice of judgment had been served upon them.

"The individuals named Tedranli Mirzé and Khuliss, having brought an action against seven persons of the village of Shenik for robbery, perpetrated after the Sasoun events, five summonses had been served on them, in order to complete the investigations previously made on this matter.

"The statements made to Her Majesty's Embassy respecting 200 Notables and other Armenians are therefore incorrect. The military exemption tax and tithes, due for the year 1310 by the inhabitants of the villages in question had been remitted.

"With regard to the taxes for 1311 and 1312, none whatever had as yet been collected, nor had any police been sent to collect them.

"It was therefore untrue that these taxes had been collected from relief funds distributed among the villagers."

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 105.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 373.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 11, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 898 of the 8th December last respecting the conduct of the Turkish soldiers during the massacres at Kharput, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a communication which I have received from the Sublime Porte in answer to my representations on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 105.

Notice.

LE Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz, invité à vérifier les renseignements contenus dans le Pro-Memoria de l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique en date du 17 Décembre dernier, répond que l'assertion d'après laquelle des troupes Impériales n'auraient fait aucune tentative sérieuse pour la répression les troubles qui s'étaient produits à Kharput est denuée de tout fondement. En effet, pendant les dits désordres les troupes Impériales n'avaient pas manqué de faire tout leur possible pour la protection des étrangers, et ce n'est que grâce aux efforts qu'elles avaient déployés que le feu qui avait pris naissance dans les maisons de certains habitants de Kharput ne s'était point communiqué à la plupart des propriétés des missionnaires. Si l'incendie avait duré quelques heures, c'est parce que l'eau faisait défaut dans la dite ville. Du reste, sans les efforts déployés par les autorités locales et les troupes Impériales l'incendie aurait certainement fait de bien plus grands ravages, étant donné que les maisons de la ville au nombre environ de 300 sont très rapprochées les unes aux autres et que le feu avait éclaté au moment même des troubles.

Le 7 Mai, 1896.

No. 106.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 376.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 11, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting protests made by Moslems against the enforcement of the reform scheme.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 106.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Diarbekir, April 28, 1896.*

TWO "mazbatas" have been sent to the Sultan within the last three weeks from the Moslems of this place protesting against any further attempt to enforce reforms in this province, and threatening to create further disturbances in case such an attempt is made. I also understand that orders have been received from Shakir Pasha to suspend the execution of the reforms until further notice. I believe that previous orders had been sent to enrol Christians in the gendarmerie, but nothing of the sort has hitherto been attempted, so that the last orders do not practically change the situation.

I do not suppose that these mazbatas are spontaneous expressions of modern feeling, as I should doubt whether the Turks in general are well satisfied with the existing state of things. I understand that Jemil Pasha and the other principal Turks who were concerned in fomenting the disturbances were the authors of these mazbatas, of which no doubt the Vali had cognizance. As one of the first steps in the direction of reform would be the removal of these persons, they are naturally interested in proving the danger of any attempt at reform. Possibly, also, the Government may like to have such documents in hand to show the difficulty of introducing the reforms which have been pressed on them by the Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 107.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 377.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 13, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing a despatch from Mr. Hampson giving corrected information with regard to the massacres in the Sairt district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 107.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to Mr. Cumberbatch's despatch of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, giving corrected information on the subject of the massacres in the district of Sairt last autumn.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 107.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Bitlis, April 13, 1896.*

IMMEDIATELY on my arrival here I instituted further inquiries into the number of the victims of recent events in Sairt and other neighbouring districts, as, in spite of all assurances to the contrary, I was convinced that the figures given in

my despatch of the 5th March were largely exaggerated. I have the honour to give below corrected Tables, which I believe to be fairly exact, and which fully justify my suspicions.

	Number of Villages.	Christian Inhabitants.	Killed.	Forcibly Converted.	Villages Plundered.
Bitlis district*	51	7,450	125	1,060	37
Akhlat	19	9,450	10	20	8
Khizan	78	16,000	600	10,000	60
Yerount	12	2,800	180	2,000	12
Shervan†	25	6,000	1,000	4,000	23
	185	41,700	1,915	17,080	140

Taking these figures with those for other districts in the vilayet, given in my despatch of the 5th February, the totals for Bitlis Vilayet are: killed, about 3,500; converted, about 22,000.

It is possible that a considerable number of these forced converts have since reverted to Christianity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 108.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 18.)

(No. 378.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 13, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum transmitting a Report from Mr. Hampson on the unsatisfactory situation at Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 108.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis on the subject of the unsatisfactory situation there and the stoppage of relief operations owing to Government interference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 108.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Bitlis, April* 14, 1896.

THERE is little new to report from here. The situation is most unsatisfactory. The town is practically in a state of siege, and hardly any of the leading Armenians dare to leave their houses. The Bishop was under arrest in his house

* Exclusive of town (except as to conversions), number of killed was included in figures given in my No. 9 of the 5th February.
† Include the four districts named in my No. 13 of the 5th March.

for some days last week and no one allowed to go there, but he is now nominally restored to liberty. The chief Armenians are being persecuted in every possible manner in order to induce them to sign a "mazbata" throwing the whole blame for recent events on foreigners. As for myself, none of the inhabitants dare to approach me, as the consequence would certainly ultimately be their arrest on some charge or other. The whole city is terrorized by the most violent of the Mussulman fanatics, the Vali being completely in their hands. The chief of them are the notorious Sheikh Amin and Hajji Nejmeddin Effendi. No doubt it is by their orders that the Vali has omitted to return my visit—a deliberate want of courtesy, which has caused much remark.

As to the relief work, the position is unchanged. We have recommenced issuing cotton and yarn to the destitute here, for the spinning and weaving of which they receive pay; but even this may be stopped at any moment; and neither the cloth when made nor any relief in money or food can be distributed. We are consequently unable to help in any way the hundreds of starving and half-naked villagers who come, often from long distances, in the hope of relief. The mortality from destitution in the villages is, I believe, very considerable. A woman died from exhaustion two days ago on her way here to beg for aid.

In answer to my frequent representations the Vali replies that he has positive orders that all relief must be distributed through the local authorities and Commission.

I have telegraphed as above to Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—As I feared, the distribution of cotton and yarn is now stopped.

C. S. H.

No. 109.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 18.)

(No. 379.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 13, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the arrival of various Christian officials from Erzeroum, Van, and Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir. *Erzeroum, April* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the arrival at Erzeroum on the 28th instant of the following Christian officials, appointed to Erzeroum, Van, and Bitlis.

Ibrahim Effendi Soussa, Syrian Catholic, Moavin of the Governor-General of Erzeroum.

Stepan Effendi Melik, Armenian, Muavin of the Governor-General of Van.

Vitchen (Vincent) Effendi Hokotzian, Judicial Inspector for Van and Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 110.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 382.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

HER Majesty's Embassy brought to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs information received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, to the effect that the Armenians of Palou and its vicinity had been prevented from sowing seed and that their cattle had been carried off by Mussulmans. The Sublime Porte now states in reply that the Vali of Diarbekir reports that this information is incorrect, and that the local authorities of Mardin were endeavouring to find the rest of the oxen lost during the massacres.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 111.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 383.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith translation of an article in the "Sabah" of yesterday, reporting that an Encyclical of the Armenian Patriarch respecting Huntchagists was read in the churches on Sunday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 111.

Extract from the "Sabah" of May 12, 1896.

(Translation.)

A CIRCULAR from the Armenian Patriarch (now issued for the second time) was read on Sunday in all the churches. It warns people against certain persons who, solely for their own selfish ends, have applied to various Armenians for subscriptions for the necessitous, and recommends any who are disposed to contribute for this purpose to do so only through the Relief Committe officially established, and to pay no attention whatever to such as have no official character.

No. 112.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 384.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

ON receipt of two telegrams from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, copies of which I have the honour to inclose, respecting the danger again threatening the Sassoun district from the migration of the nomad Kurds, I instructed Mr. Block to bring the substance of Mr. Hampson's information to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to make a strong appeal to his Excellency to take measures to prevent any renewal in that district of robbing on the part of the Kurds, and oppression on the part of the authorities.

Mr. Block reminded his Excellency that the events of Sassoun had been the origin of the agitation in England, and said that the renewal of the agitation would inevitably

ensue unless the Porte took some severe and efficacious measures. He accordingly requested Tewfik Pasha, in my name, to cause the necessary instructions to be given to the Vali of Bitlis and the Acting Mutessarif of Moush, and urged that a special Commissioner should be sent, with authority to exercise a proper control pending the arrival of Shakir Pasha in the Sassoun district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 112.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Moush, May 10, 1896.*

THE Sassoun Kurds took nearly £T. 5 from the village of Hitenk by threatening to sack the village. The Acting Mutessarif says he will take steps, but he will not give a promise that the money shall be restored.

Nomad Kurds will be moving before long, and it is urgent that steps should be taken for the protection of Sassoun.

Inclosure 2 in No. 112.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Moush, May 10, 1896.*

MY telegram No. 74.

Reason given for the refusal to promise restitution of money was that, now that the distribution in Sassoun is ended, I have no right of interference in matters there. I foresee trouble in that direction. Authorities are making inquiries whether I still pretend to protect people of Sassoun, whom they evidently intend to arrest, or at least harass, as revolutionaries.

No. 113.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 385.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 867 of the 27th November, 1895, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Jeddah, reporting the release of the Bedouins arrested in connection with the attack on the Consuls at Jeddah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 113.

Acting Consul Alban to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Jeddah, April 24, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 12th November last, I have the honour to report that Abdullah-bin-Wassil and the other Bedouins, who had been imprisoned here since the end of October last, were released a few days after the Vali had made his visit of excuse to the three Consulates. The prisoners, on their release, were taken before the Kaïmakam, who told them that they should forget what had happened, and assist the

Ottoman Government in the future. To this only one of the prisoners made any reply The Bedouins imprisoned in Mecca were released at the same time. The Grand Shereef and Vali had for some time been anxious to carry out this measure, in order that they might be able to induce the Harb tribe to supply camels for the Medina caravan, and thus insure for themselves the usual profits which they derive from this source.

There is now no longer any pretence made of attempting to arrest the murderers of Dr. Abdur Razzack, and peace has been patched up with the Harb tribe.

A few days ago some of the Harbs made a raid on a small tribe of Ashraf to the south of Mecca road, and carried off about twenty camels, one or two lives being lost on both sides during the affray. The cause of the raid appears to have been a blood feud existing between the tribes.

The Ottoman steam-ship "Sughully" left for Constantinople on the 17th instant with 1,800 time-expired Turkish troops, including the men whose recent insubordinate conduct in Mecca I reported in my despatch of the 4th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR D. ALBAN.

No. 114.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 386.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1896.*

IN consequence of information which reached this Embassy of difficulties in connection with the distribution of seed in the Armenian villages in the Vilayet of Erzeroum, I instructed Mr. Block to make representations on the subject to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Grand Vizier, to whom the matter was referred, replied, on the 30th ultimo, that, upon inquiries previously made and reports already received from the authorities on this subject, the Council of Ministers had decided to make an advance of about 60,000 piastres to the distressed villagers of the Beiburt district in order that they should be able to procure seed. This money would be distributed to them by a special Commission composed of trustworthy persons.

I consequently addressed a telegram to Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum informing him of this decision of the Council of Ministers, and inquiring of him what steps were being taken to carry it out, and I now have the honour to inclose copy of a telegram which I have received from Mr. Graves in reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 114.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Erzeroum, May 12, 1896.*

THE grant of £T. 600 for Beiburt was announced to Vali nearly a fortnight ago, and is being distributed in the form of seed among 12,000 destitute Christians of caza. More than £T. 1,300 have been distributed in same district through our Relief Committee. Vali is also sending more than 200 liras for seed to Khinis, and is taking measures to recover some stolen cattle from the Kurds, otherwise nothing is being done by the Government to relieve distress. So far we have appropriated about 8,000 liras for (distribution to) 50,000 sufferers.

No. 115.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 387.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a translation of an extract from the Turkish newspapers of the 12th May, publishing a Petition to the Grand Vizier signed by the Patriarch of the Syrian Jacobite Church, expressing the gratitude of his flock to the Sultan and protesting against the conduct of the Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 115.

Extract from the "Sabah" of May 12, 1896.

Petition from the Jacobite Patriarch to the Grand Vizier, dated April 27, 1896.

(Translation.)

MY nation is most grateful to his Majesty for the protection he has ever accorded to it, as also to our Mussulman compatriots, but the Armenians have for some time past endeavoured to Armenianize our language and religion, so long preserved thanks to the Mussulman law. Profiting of the disturbances recently caused by them in certain vilayets, they have endeavoured to carry out their design of appropriating our places of worship and property and of interfering in our religious services.

Letters from our spiritual Chiefs at Ourfa and Bitlis, amongst other places, signed by many respectable persons, have reached us which prove that the Armenians have slain and plundered many of our community, and that their design is to completely annihilate it by famine and by other means. Under these circumstances we can but appeal to the Sovereign, our sole refuge, to protect us in his clemency.

No. 116.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 390.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 363 of the 7th May respecting a reported raid by Nestorian Christians on a Kurdish village in the Hekkiari district, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that in reply to my inquiries, I have received a telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van stating that he has no certain information regarding the raid, but that, in his opinion, the account given by the Minister of the Interior was probably exaggerated.

He adds that the Vali is still making inquiries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 117.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 393.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 14, 1896.*

ON the 6th March Mr. Terrell, the United States Minister, asked me to instruct Mr. Fontana on his arrival at Kharput to ascertain how far the Turkish troops and civil functionaries were implicated in the burning and pillaging of American school property in that town, adding that he would be glad to learn any details as to the attitude of Government officials on that occasion and the disposal which was finally made of the pillaged property.

I accordingly requested Mr. Fontana to make inquiries and report upon the matter, and I now have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received in reply, inclosing a summary of the evidence furnished to Mr. Fontana by some twenty individuals who were present at Kharput during the disturbances, which, in Mr. Fontana's opinion, establishes beyond any doubt the participation by the authorities in the attack upon the Protestant quarter and more particularly upon the American Mission.

I have communicated a copy of Mr. Fontana's despatch to the United States Chargé d'Affaires.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 117.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Kharput, April 25, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 9th ultimo, instructing me to inquire into and report upon the attitude of Government officials and the proceedings of the Turkish troops in connection with the destruction of American school property in this town, and the subsequent disposition of the plunder, I have the honour herewith to transmit a summary of the evidence furnished me by some twenty individuals, each of whom was present at Kharput during the disturbance and witnessed certain of its phases.

I have carefully interrogated and cross-examined these persons, and have avoided as far as possible hearsay evidence of any kind. I have myself seen the fragments of the three shells which burst in the mission buildings, but apart from this fact, the proofs forthcoming as to the pre-arrangement of the disturbance by the authorities and the attack organized by them upon the Protestant quarter, and more particularly upon the American Mission, are, in my opinion, too convincing to admit of any serious doubt. The affair, in fact, is still alluded to by the better-disposed Turks as a "Ressni Jinayet," "an official crime."

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 117.

Summary of Evidence.

SOME weeks before the outbreak occurred the military commander of Kharput, General Mustapha Pasha, had himself visited various Kurdish villages and had sent emissaries to others with instructions to invite the tribes to attack the town.

A certain Bekir Effendi was ordered by letter to bring 500 of his clan to the sack of Kharput. Martini rifles were distributed among the Kurdish tribes. Certain Kurds from Zaza, a place situated twelve hours from the capital, have declared to Armenians that the Government sent officers to them bearing letters authorizing the slaughter of Christians and the pillage of their property; that the bugle sounded for the attack upon the Protestant quarter; and that many Redifs assisted them in the disguise of Kurds.

The day before the disturbances actually took place hundreds of Kurds assembled on the hills behind Kharput. A few soldiers were sent to disperse them, and after a few moments parley the Kurds withdrew. On the following morning, however, they again advanced towards the Protestant quarter from the plain below the town. A large force of troops had been stationed on that side of the city; they fired in the air in the direction of the Kurds who also fired into the air and then halted. The troops thereupon retired towards the walls dragging with them two cannon, one of which was placed alongside the medressé—Turkish

school—some 300 yards from the mission buildings, and to the right of the Protestant quarter. The other was located at a spot called Ponjarlik, to the left of but facing the buildings in question. A third cannon was conveyed to a hill overlooking the town. A bugle then sounded and the troops by the medressé [*sic*], under the command of the Mir-Alai, opened a fusillade upon the Protestant quarter, which the Turks had previously vacated. The Kurds were still outside the city. The firing continued for about four hours, the Mir-Alai giving the signal for each volley. Meanwhile one cannon at the medressé and another at Ponjarlik, the latter under the superintendence of a Chanak and a Mulazim, opened fire upon the quarter referred to. Some fourteen rounds were fired from one cannon alone. During the cannonade dust and earth were seen flying from Mr. Brown's house, the chapel, and from the girls school. Fragments of shells and a cannon-ball were subsequently found in Dr. Barnum's house and in the ruins of Mr. Allen's house and of the chapel. A large number of bullet marks are still visible in the façade of Mr. Gates' residence.

As soon as as the signal to stop firing had been given some thirty soldiers entered the medressé courtyard and were seen to put on Kurdish costume over their uniforms before issuing forth. The officers, soldiery, and rabble of Turks and Kurds collected in the vicinity of a house belonging to a Turk named Deli Hadji, formerly in the Government service, who after offering up prayer from his housetop urged on the mob to attack the Protestant quarter. When his exhortation was concluded two or three officers shouted out 'Haidé Balbetelerin Evlerine" —"On to the pastor's houses,"—and the troops and people surged on towards the mission buildings. Dr. Barnum's house was broken into by soldiers and softas; no Kurds were allowed to enter. The door was smashed with axes, and the whole of the furniture and valuables were carried off. Dr. Wheeler's and Mr. Allen's houses were also plundered and then set on fire. A municipal fire-engine was brought up and filled by two soldiers from *closed* petroleum tins—petroleum tins used for water are open at one end—the engine was made to play upon these houses, with the result that the flames immediately increased. The greater part of the Protestant quarter was fired with petroleum brought from the Government store in jars.

An Armenian who had fled with others from the girls' school and had been fired upon by soldiers, took refuge in Mr. Gates' house after its evacuation; he states that he heard a voice calling from the door that the safe was there. A party of sixteen soldiers then entered by the front entrance, at the same time some Kurds burst in by the back door and began to break open the safe. The soldiers, however, at once drove them out of the house, wrenched open the safe, and divided the money it contained among themselves. After the soldiers' departure the Kurds returned and, finding no money, demolished the few pictures left on the walls and the timber of the floors.

When the conflagration subsided Mustapha Pasha is *said* to have asked why some of the mission houses were still standing. The Mir-Alai was overheard by certain Armenians (hidden that evening in a Moslem house) deprecating the whole affair; declaring that his hands had been tied, and adding "may the eyes of him who is responsible for the disturbance be blinded" ("Ghiuzlari Kyur Olsoun").

The more valuable portion of the plundered property is asserted upon good grounds to be now in the possession of Turkish officers and officials. Subsequent to the disturbance two empty houses outside the town were filled with plunder by Kurds. An Armenian woman who bears a high character for truth and honesty states that she saw a Mulazim and eight cavalry soldiers carrying the plunder out of these houses. They divided a large portion among themselves and piled up the greater part of what was left in an ox-waggon, saying that they would take it as a present to Mustapha Pasha; a few worthless things were handed over to the Kurds.

A quantity of looted furniture, carpets, &c., are now believed to be hidden in the house of Mir-Alai.

No. 118.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Substance received by telegraph, May 14.)

(No. 398.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 18, 1896.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 366 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to state that on the 12th instant the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that he had submitted to the Sultan the observations and suggestions which I had made to him with regard to the question of conversions at Birejik, and added that he entertained hopes of a favourable decision being arrived at in the matter. On the following day Mr. Block, First Dragoman of the Embassy, went to the Palace, and was received by the Sultan's First Secretary, who, after repeated communications with His Majesty informed him that the following steps had been decided upon :—

1. Regular troops would be substituted for the Reserves.

2. Telegraphic instructions would be sent to the Commission of Inquiry then at Marash, to proceed at once to Birejik, and inquire into the question of the church which, as reported by Mr. Fitzmaurice, had been converted into a mosque, under the name of the Hamidié Mosque, and in the event of this being the case, to restore it to its former condition, and deliver it back to the Christian community.

3. Further instructions would be sent to the Commission not to leave Biredjik until, by means of efficacious measures, confidence was thoroughly restored, so that the converts might be enabled to declare openly and officially their real religious views and perform their religious worship in perfect security.

On receipt of this information I instructed Mr. Block to write to Tahsin Bey, taking note of the verbal communication, made in the Sultan's name, and expressing my acknowledgment of the action which His Majesty had been good enough to take on the suggestions which I had submitted to him.

On taking leave of the Sultan last Friday, His Majesty thanked me for my messages, and said that he would shortly make some further communications to Her Majesty's Embassy on the subject, through the intermediary of the First Dragoman.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 119.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 160.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 17, 1896, 10·30 P.M.*

THE British Vice-Consul at Alexandretta has telegraphed that troops to the number of about 3,000 have arrived from the interior, and are encamped at Alexandretta. They are all discontented, and proclaim openly that they will plunder the town if their wages are not paid in a few days. Great anxiety is being caused by their very hostile attitude towards Christians. The presence of a man-of-war is requested for their protection by the British subjects resident there, and the Vice-Consul recommends this request to me.

No. 119*.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 17, 1896, 10·30 P.M.*

MY immediately preceding telegram respecting Alexandretta.

I have sent to the Porte, warning them of the dangerous state of affairs there.

No. 120.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 164.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 18, 1896, 11·25 A.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Jeddah has reported by telegraph the arrival there, on the 13th May, of Bahri Pasha, ex-Vali of Van, and states that the secrecy which has been maintained has given rise to the rumour that he would receive the appointment of Vali. He has heard that it was stated confidentially by the Governor that when the pilgrimage is over, Bahri Pasha will be appointed to the command of the troops, whose numbers will be increased by 5,000.

No. 121.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 165.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 18, 1896, 11·55 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 160, telegrams have been received from the Consular officers at Mersina and Alexandretta, stating that the troops encamped near those towns are clamouring for pay, and threatening pillage if they do not receive it. In the opinion of the Consuls the presence of a man-of-war is desirable.

If your Lordship considers it expedient for vessels to visit these ports, I would request that instructions to that effect be sent by the Admiralty.

I have no information as to the movements of Her Majesty's ships.

No. 122.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 166.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 18, 1896, 1·45 P.M.*

BIREJIK Commission.

I propose that Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice should be sent to watch the proceedings, and he will leave Smyrna on Friday. During his absence Mr. Shipley will take charge.

No. 123.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 168.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 19, 1896, 11·30 A.M.*

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 165 of the 18th instant, instructions have been sent by the Grand Vizier that troops at Alexandretta and Mersina shall be paid, and order maintained.

No. 124.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 19, 1896.*

I HAVE received Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 166 of yesterday, stating that his Excellency proposed to send Mr. Fitzmaurice to Biredjik to watch the proceedings of the Commission which has been ordered to proceed thither, and that Mr. Shipley would take charge of the Consulate-General at Smyrna during his absence.

These arrangements are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 125.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 169.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 20, 1896, 11·55 A.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Jeddah has telegraphed reporting the arrival there, on the evening of the 18th, of the steamers "Assyr" from Yemen, with more than 1,000 troops on board, supposed to be destined for Constantinople, and "Said" from Constantinople, with 1,700 men, 90 mules, and 6 guns.

While the soldiers were being landed yesterday from the "Said" a telegram arrived from the Vali, ordering them to return on board.

They may go, it is said, to El Widy, or Yambo. Further bodies of troops are expected to arrive. On 13th May 1,500 soldiers arrived and proceeded to Mecca, where Bahri Pasha now is.

Much comment has been excited by his arrival and the sudden increase of troops

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No. 126.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 170.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 20, 1896, 10 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir has telegraphed to-day in the following sense:—

"My telegram of the 17th instant. In consequence of rumours of intended massacre at Bairam I put off my departure. Though at first I did not attach much importance to them, I now find that they are well founded and extremely serious. Talaat Effendi is stirring up the Turks in the towns, while Jemil Pasha is in a village collecting Kurds for an attack on the town. In the last massacre both of these men took a prominent and active part. Their plan is as follows: The telegraph wires will be cut, the British and French Consulates attacked, and then the Christians massacred. To prevent disaster the arrest of these two men is absolutely necessary, and I hope that the civil and military authorities will receive immediate and categorical instructions to that effect, and to take all precautions that may be necessary, as unless they have precise instructions they cannot be trusted to do their duty. The Cadi is acting for the Vali, who is at Farkin, fifteen hours from here. Many of the officers are untrustworthy, though Zia Pasha, the Military Commandant, is well disposed.

"I hope that this matter will receive the most earnest consideration of your Excellency."

I am making representations to the Sublime Porte in the sense of this telegram.

No. 127.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 173.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 22, 1896, 7 P.M.*

MY telegram No. 170 of the 19th instant.

All possibility of disturbance is denied by the Porte, but they have nevertheless dispatched orders that every precaution may be taken, and the Vali of Diarbekir will return to his post.

This telegram has also been sent to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir.

No. 128.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 396.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 18, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 367 of the 7th instant, inclosing copy of a Circular despatch which I had addressed to Her Majesty's Consular officers in the districts of Asia Minor, to which the reforms are to apply, I now have the honour to transmit copy of a further Circular addressed by me to Her Majesty's Consular officers in the six Armenian provinces, calling their special attention to certain points in connection with Shakir Pasha's tour of inspection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 128.

Circular.

Sir, *Pera, May 9, 1896.*

WITH reference to my Circular despatch of yesterday's date as to the execution of the reforms, I have to call your special attention to the following points in connection with Shakir Pasha's visit:—

1. You should suggest to Shakir Pasha the livas and cazas where Christian Muavins might with advantage be appointed, reporting at the same time to Her Majesty's Embassy.

2. You should report Shakir Pasha's views as to the nomination of the Kaimakams being vested in the Valis, together with your own opinion of such an arrangement.

3. You should ascertain and report what are the results of Shakir Pasha's inquiries into the proposed arrangements for nahiés and what steps are being taken. Have the Mutessarifs reported on the subject?

4. You should ascertain whether the judicial inspectors have acted on their instructions to report every three months to the Ministry of Justice, and if they have failed to do so, you should make representations on the subject to Shakir Pasha and to the Vali.

5. You should ascertain and report what is being done in regard to the revision of title-deeds, and you should bring to the notice of the Commissions through Shakir Pasha or the Vali any cases where lands have been arbitrarily seized or title-deeds stolen or destroyed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 129.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 398.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 18, 1896.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 366 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to state that on the 12th instant the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that he had submitted to the Sultan the observations and suggestions which I had made to him with regard to the question of conversions at Birejik, and added that he entertained hopes of a favourable decision being arrived at in the matter.

On the following day, Mr. Block, First Dragoman of this Embassy, went to the Palace, and was received by the Sultan's First Secretary, who, after repeated communications with His Majesty, informed him that the following steps had been decided upon:—

1. Regular troops would be substituted for the Reserves.

2. Telegraphic instructions would be sent to the Commission of Inquiry then at Marash to proceed at once to Birejik and inquire into the question of the church which, as reported by Mr. Fitzmaurice, had been converted into a mosque, under the

name of the Hamidié Mosque, and, in the event of this being the case, to restore it to its former condition, and deliver it back to the Christian community.

3. Further instructions would be sent to the Commission not to leave Birejik until, by means of efficacious measures, confidence was thoroughly restored, so that the converts might be enabled to declare openly and officially their real religious views, and perform their religious worship in perfect security.

On receipt of this information, I instructed Mr. Block to write to Tahsin Bey, taking note of the verbal communication made in the Sultan's name, and expressing my acknowledgment of the action which His Majesty had been good enough to take on the suggestions which I had submitted to him.

On taking leave of the Sultan last Friday, His Majesty thanked me for my messages, and said that he would shortly make some further communications to Her Majesty's Embassy on the subject, through the intermediary of the First Dragoman.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 130.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 112.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 23, 1896.*

I HAVE received Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 384 of the 14th instant, forwarding copies of two telegrams from Mr. Vice-Consul Hampson relative to the renewed danger impending over the Sassoun district from the migration of the nomad Kurds, and reporting the representations which, by his Excellency's instructions, Mr. Block had made to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject.

Sir P. Currie's action in this matter has the entire approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 131.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 399.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 20, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Angora respecting the prohibition to carry arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 131.

Acting Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, May 12, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Vali has received an order from the Porte enjoining him to prohibit the carrying of arms by any private person who is not specially authorized to do so in the pursuit of his vocation, such, for instance, as the preventive men ("coldjis") employed by the Régie, those in the service of the Administration of the Public Debt, Consular cavasses, and others similarly employed.

This order, I am given to understand, is now being carried out, so far as the carrying of arms openly is concerned, but I am inclined to believe that those Turks who have been in the habit of keeping weapons about their person will continue to do so, in spite of the prohibition, merely taking the precaution to conceal what in the past they openly displayed.

The Christians never having been allowed to carry arms are not affected by the measure in the smallest degree. So that although the intention of the Government is praiseworthy, the practical results obtained will be but small.

The only really satisfactory method of bringing about a general disarmament would consist in a house-to-house visitation by the police and the confiscation of all arms found in the houses of persons not authorized to possess them.

But it is needless to say that in the case of Mussulmans, the real offenders, such an order could not be thoroughly carried out owing to the sacrosanctity of the harem, so that such a search as I have described would be necessarily confined to Christian houses, a result which, apart from the question of the injustice of the thing, may be described as in the last degree nugatory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 132.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 401.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 20, 1896.*

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 364 of the 7th May, reporting the sentences passed on twelve Armenians at Moush, and the representations that he instructed Mr. Block to make at the Sublime Porte in consequence, I have now the honour to inform your Lordship that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, after correspondence with the local authorities, states that certain Armenians were tried for the murder of an Armenian priest named Parsegh, who had turned informer against some Armenian revolutionists; five of them have been condemned to death, three to three years' imprisonment, one to five years, two to seven years, and one to one month.

The crime for which they were tried had been committed on the 23rd September, 1895, and they could not, therefore, benefit by the amnesty, which was proclaimed on the 11th July of the same year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 133.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 143.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 26, 1896.*

I HAVE received Sir P. Currie's despatches Nos. 366 and 398 of the 7th and 18th instant respectively, reporting the representations which his Excellency made to the Porte on the question of forced conversions at Birejik, and the measures which the Sultan had decided to take in consequence.

Sir P. Currie's action in this matter meets with the entire approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 134.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 182.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 20, 1896, 12·10 P.M.*

STRONG representations respecting the Kaïmakam of Zeitoun were again made yesterday by the Representatives of the six Powers, in accordance with a decision come to at a meeting on the previous day, but they only elicited an evasive reply from Tewfik Pasha. We shall meet again to consider what further steps are to be taken should nothing be done in the next few days.

No. 135.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 407.)

My Lord, *Pera, May 25, 1896.*

INFORMATION having reached this Embassy from the Bible House of the terrible state of affairs prevailing in the villages of Tadem, Nor-Kegh, and Palo, as reported by the missionaries in those districts, Sir P. Currie instructed Mr. Fontana on his arrival to inquire into, and ascertain the truth of, these statements.

I have now the honour to transmit copy of his Report, and, in view of the situation described by him, I have instructed him to make strong representations to Shakir Pasha on the subject when he visits Kharput.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 135.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May 2, 1896.*

IN accordance with the instructions conveyed in your Excellency's despatch of the 7th ultimo, I have the honour herewith to transmit a Report upon the state of affairs alluded to in Dr. Barnum's letter of the 17th January last, the copy of which is duly returned herein, as then prevailing in Tadem, Nor-Kegh, and the Palo villages.

The details comprised in my Report have been collected from the evidence afforded by a number of refugees from the districts in question, whom I have severally and carefully examined. The number of victims in Tadem and Nor-Kegh would appear to have been somewhat over-estimated by Dr. Barnum in his letter to Mr. Peet, but it is no doubt true that the majority of the younger and more attractive Christian women residing in these villages have suffered as he describes.

The fact of thirty-five Armenian women at Uzoun-Oba having preferred death by drowning to dishonour at the hands of the Kurds is confirmed by the testimony of three eye-witnesses, one of whom only escaped death at the time by swimming across the stream.

As Tadem is situated within this vilayet I propose urging the Vali to take measures for the arrest and punishment of the Aga, Hadji Beygo, who was the ringleader in the outrages perpetrated there; and who is moreover charged with the assassination of a number of witnesses summoned to give evidence against his son, Hafiz, who was arrested some time ago for murder committed prior to the date of the disturbances.

In conclusion I would submit that the summary dismissal of Saïd Effendi, the Palo Commissary of Police, is greatly to be desired, as far as the well-being of the Christain villagers is concerned, who not unjustly consider him as their chief oppressor.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 135.

Report on the state of Affairs in the Vilayet of Maamuret-ul-Aziz.

Tadem.—During the disturbance about 100 persons, for the most part women and girls, took refuge in the house of the Aga of Tadem, Hadji Beygo. The younger and more attractive were outraged the same evening and subsequently by the Aga, his son Hafiz, and their Kurdish friends. Many of the victims were afterwards given as presents to Bekjis and to Kurdish visitors from the surrounding country. Several women were led away from the Aga's house in a state of complete nudity. Two of the Tadem refugees now in Kharput estimate the total female population of the village at 600 persons, of whom they believe the great majority to have been ravished. The Armenian Murakhass, however, affirms that out of over 1,000 females resident in Tadem not more than 350 have suffered in this way, and that all those who were carried off by the Kurds have now been restored to their friends, although many of them are with child by Mussulman fathers.

Vilayet of Diarbekir.

Palo villages.—Nor-Kegh (Yenikeui): subsequent to the outbreak in Nor-Kegh a crowd of women and girls took refuge in the stable of Shukri Bey, Aga of the village. At nightfall the Aga entered the stable and, after looking the refugees over, selected one and took her upstairs. His Kurdish guests, Yusuf Aga, Reschid Aga, and Ismail Aga, then appeared and dragged off others to the upper rooms. Shukri Bey's servants afterwards followed suite. These proceedings continued for no less than ten days.

A zaptieh who subsequently applied for a maiden was told by Shukri Bey that there were none left, but that he would find one in a neighbouring village, the daughter of a certain Kukor.

A woman arriving in Kharput upon the 21st ultimo declares that the Aga and his household were even then still engaged in similar outrages, the chief culprits being his servants, Hanfé Carolu Mustafa, Tetuhlu Haya Injé Sayar, Madeli Zilfi Saffo, and Seidli Bostanji; and that any Armenian desirous of freeing a woman or girl from her sufferings was obliged to ransom her from the Bey.

Sakrat.—At the time of the disturbances in the Palo district the Agas of Sakrat, Ibrahim and Rushdi Beys, sons of Hadji Nejib Pasha, of Constantinople, under the pretext of protecting the village, sent for forty soldiers from the Palo Barracks. Some 10,000 refugees had fled to Sakrat in the hope of protection. When the troops alluded to, in the company of a band of Kurds, arrived, they were billeted upon Armenian families, and very soon began dishonouring the Armenian women. Husbands and fathers succeeded in saving their wives and daughters for a time by paying the soldiers, but were eventually forced to hand them over. Upwards of 1,000 females are computed to have been dishonoured by the soldiery and Kurds.

One evening a number of soldiers and Kurds left the village to meet a band of fugitives from Habab. Upon their return to Sakrat three girl refugees were brought by troopers to a room where an Armenian was sleeping. The girls were then taken out to the "aivan," or portico of the house, and the Armenian was roused by female voices crying, "Is there no one to help us?" Thereupon he went quietly to the "aivan" entrance, and there saw rape committed, the foremost ravisher being Saïd Effendi, the Commissary of Police.

Village of Palo.—The wife of a man named Bugian was herself wounded by a bullet. She was carried to a field at the back of the Government konak and there outraged by a soldier. She died shortly afterwards. This fact is confirmed by testimony from several sources.

Yaremja.—Few women and girls in this village appear to have escaped dishonour. The chief criminals were the Aga's servant and his shepherd.

Sloch.—Seventeen females, whose names are specified, and four of whom were girls aged respectively 10, 13, 13, and 14, were carried off from this village, and ravished by Kurds and Turks. All of them have now, however, been returned, after a lapse of several months.

Aivos.—Previous to the disturbance there were some 150 Christian families in Aivos itself. Upwards of forty women and girls were subsequently outraged or abducted from this village.

Uzoun Oba.—Thirty-five Armenian women threw themselves into the Euphrates, near Uzoun Oba, to escape dishonour, and were drowned.

Three others were carried off by the village Aga, who still withholds one of them from their relations.

Habab.—Some fifteen or twenty females took refuge in an empty house close by the Government konak at Habab. Some gendarmes finally discovered them, took them one by one to another house, outraged them, and brought them back. One woman is alleged by an eye-witness to have been thus taken out at separate times by four different men.

Nazareakeui.—Sixteen females were carried off by Kurds and Turks from this village, of whom thirteen were afterwards allowed to return. Three women, however, whose respective names are Huiret, Baidoli, and Hormok, are still missing.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 136.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 408.)
My Lord,
Pera, May 25, 1896.

THE French Government have bestowed the decoration of the Legion of Honour on the Mutessarif and the Chief Accountant of the District of Jebel-Bereket for the energy and courage which they displayed in saving the lives of certain Capuchin monks during the disturbances there.

The French Chargé d'Affaires informs me that his Government are anxious that publicity should be given to these decorations, as by that means alone do they consider that they will be able to save these officials from the displeasure of the central authorities for having by good behaviour earned the gratitude of a foreign Power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 137.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 412.)
My Lord,
Pera, May 27, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that on receipt of Mr. Cumberbatch's despatch No. 313 of the 16th December, 1895, respecting the attitude of the Government towards the Kurds in the Vilayet of Van, which formed the inclosure in Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 936 of the 15th December, Her Majesty's Embassy called the attention of the Sublime Porte to the fact that the Kurds of the Hamidieh regiments in that vilayet did not obey the orders given to them, and that even the Kurds who did not actually belong to those regiments were not brought before the Courts of Justice, and that fears were entertained that fresh raids on the part of the Kurds would soon occur.

The Grand Vizier has now informed me that the Minister of War has sent instructions to the Mushirs and Commanders-in-chief of the army corps to the effect that, in time of peace, officers of the Hamidieh regiments must be treated as Redif officers, and the privates as Nizam soldiers of the Reserve, that is to say, as mere private individuals.

As to the Kurds not actually belonging to the Hamidieh regiments, the Vali of Van has reported to the Porte that they are always summoned before the local authorities for any offence committed by them, and are dealt with according to law.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 138.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 416.)
My Lord,
Pera, May 28, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 398 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum which I have received from the First Dragoman of this Embassy, reporting conversations which he has had with the Sultan's First Secretary and with Izzet Bey on the subject of the Birejik conversions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 138.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I TOOK the opportunity yesterday at the Palace of speaking again to the First Secretary and Izzet Bey about the Birejik conversions. I showed them again the Report furnished by Mr. Fitzmaurice, and signed by the Turkish Commissioners and himself, proving that they admitted that the converts accepted the religion of Islam through fear and to save their lives, and for no other reason. I therefore urged them to have orders sent to the Commission now proceeding there not to recognize or allow a profession of Islam through terror. I stated that Mr. Fitzmaurice had orders from Her Majesty's Government to return to Birejik, and I used every argument to persuade them that in the interests of His Majesty the Commission should act energetically and see that the converts returned to Christianity, and that the mosque was reconverted to a church. I regret to state that I could get no further concessions than those already obtained. Izzet Bey and the First Secretary did not seem to like the idea of Mr. Fitzmaurice going, and all I could get out of them was that the Commission had the very strictest orders to restore order and confidence by any means they could devise so that every one would be at liberty to choose whatsoever religion he pleased. The Commission will also inquire into the question of the church which has been converted into a mosque.

In order to show the futility of endeavouring to impress upon any one in office at the Palace the gravity of this conversion question and the harm it does the Sultan and the Turkish Government, I may add that, in the course of the conversation, Izzet Bey insisted that the real reason why the Christians had become Moslems was to attract the sympathies and attention of Europe, and of England specially, and said that if he was sent there to inquire into the matter he would report to that effect, and would absolutely decline to order these converts to revert to Christianity.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

May 26, 1896.

No. 139.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 420.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, May 28, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the state of affairs in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 139.

Vice-Consul Williams to Sir P. Currie.

Sir,
Van, May 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that there is no change in the situation which remains most serious. During the past week an attempt was made to fire the American Mission during the night, and it only failed by an accident. The authors of this outrage are unknown, but I have since arranged for a special patrol of regular troops to visit the premises regularly during the night. An attempt was also made to wreck the bazaar, but the Vali was warned in time, and took the necessary precautions. Saadeddin Pasha is expected back soon; he appears to have done absolutely nothing to punish the Kurds guilty of the late outrages. The result is most deplorable, as outside the town there is no security whatever. The relief work is being carried on in co-operation with the Vali, and without friction on either side. Expeditions have been sent in various directions to help the villagers in their own homes. Charity cannot, however, indefinitely support a population. Fortunately, a large area of wheat was

sown last autumn, but unless some strong measures are taken, and that soon, to guarantee security, next winter will see scenes to which this year's misery will be child's play.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 140.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 421.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 25 of the 13th January last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the futility of the steps taken by the Porte with regard to the notorious Kurd Chiefs, Hussein, Emin, and Tamir Pashas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 15, 1896.*

WITH reference to Mr. Cumberbatch's despatches of the 10th and 24th December, 1895, I have the honour to report that, of the three notorious Kurd Chiefs—Hussein, Emin, and Tamir Pashas—summoned to Erzeroum by Shakir Pasha, Emin Pasha has been allowed to escape and return to his home at Arjish, while Hussein and Tamir remain nominally under surveillance at Erzeroum. It may be expected that Emin Pasha's return to Arjish will further aggravate the serious situation reported by Major Williams in his despatch to your Excellency of the 6th May, as existing in the district of Van.

There appears to be no present prospect of these arch-robbers and assassins being made to suffer for their misdeeds. Shakir Pasha had confidently asserted to the Consuls here that Hussein at least would be tried by court-martial, but it is no secret now that his recommendations to that effect were summarily rejected by the Porte, although the Procureur Général of Erzeroum is in possession of a large mass of evidence of his guilt, and although another Kurd Chief has come forward and lodged formal informations and claims for damages against him for acts of pillage and homicide committed in the course of tribal feuds.

The futility of Shakir Pasha's mission of reform is well exemplified by this case. The final removal of Hussein Pasha and his fellows from the districts of which they have so long been the scourge, would be the first step towards establishing that condition of comparative security which must precede any attempt to introduce administrative reforms. Yet that step, when proposed by the Inspector-General of the Anatolian provinces, and supported by the Valis of the vilayets concerned, is at once vetoed at Constantinople, and these protégés of the Central Government will no doubt shortly be allowed to return to their old courses, strong in the conviction that, while Turkish rule lasts, as at present constituted, no local authority will dare to interfere with them again.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 141.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 422.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the arrival of the Christian Assistant of the Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 141.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May 14, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the arrival in Kharput of Stephan Effendi who has been appointed Assistant to the Vali of Maamuret-ul-Aziz.

Stephan Effendi was formerly, he tells me, in the Ottoman Consular service, and was subsequently attached to the Danube Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 142.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 423.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 28, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship decypher of a telegram which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, stating that owing to the energy of Zia Pasha, the Military Commander, there have been no disturbances at that place, but that no arrests have been made, and the Vali is still at Farkin.

Both Her Majesty's Embassy and the French Embassy have repeatedly made representations at the Sublime Porte with a view to the dismissal of the Vali of Diarbekir, but hitherto their efforts have not been attended with the slightest success. I will, however, continue to make representations on the subject.

With regard to Mr. Hallward's suggestions respecting Zia Pasha, I am of opinion that in view of the treatment which Feham Pasha, the late Mutessarif at Mush, received at the hands of the Turkish Government, it would be more discreet to refrain from recommending Zia Pasha as the successor of the present Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 142.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Diarbekir, May 26, 1896.*

THANKS to the energy of Zia Pasha, the Military Commander, there has been no disturbance, though no arrests have been made and the Vali is still at Farkin. His absence is rather an advantage than otherwise; there will be no improvement or real security till he is removed. His attitude towards Christians remains the same as at the time of the massacre. Zia Pasha is the only trustworthy official of importance, and his appointment as Vali would have an excellent effect. In any case a change is urgently needed.

No. 143.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 188.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 3, 1896, 5 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo has telegraphed that next Thursday Her Majesty's ship "Howe" will leave Scanderoon, and that the Acting Vice-Consul at that place asks that another ship may be sent with orders not to leave so long as the troops keep under arms and the state of the country remains unsettled.

No. 144.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 156 A.) *Foreign Office, June 3, 1896.*

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador stated to me to-day that the Porte had the fullest intention of fulfilling its pledges by appointing a Christian Kaïmakam of Zeitoun. But it could not be done until the present antagonism of creeds and races was appeased; otherwise it would cause a renewal of the scenes of bloodshed, of which the Sultan would not take the responsibility.

I took note of his Excellency's declaration. I reminded him of the Sultan's solemn obligations, and I said that Her Majesty's Government looked to his honour, which His Majesty must protect by his fidelity to his engagements.

At the same time, I said I would not assume the responsibility of urging on the Sultan any precipitate action which he was of opinion would produce a renewal of the massacres.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 145.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 424.) *Constantinople, May 29, 1896.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 349 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting the movements of the Commission of Inquiry, and on the state of affairs in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT

Inclosure in No. 145.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

Diarbekir, May 13, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th ultimo announcing the departure of Abdullah Pasha for Mossul, I have the honour to report that Sami Bey and Rushdi Bey, the other members of the Commission, have gone to Kharput, the former having left ten days ago and the latter on the 7th instant. These men have been here for the last four months drawing large salaries and doing nothing. It would be superfluous to point out the folly of sending these expensive Commissions to the provinces at a time when the country is in a state of financial ruin, and when its real needs are rather a reduction than an increase of officials, and the appointment of capable and honest men empowered to enforce the existing laws and administer impartial justice to all.

Another instance of useless expense is the appointment of the Assistant Governor

who does not even sit in the Administrative Council and has no influence in the Government.

The Vali left on the 9th for Farkin. He was accompanied by Hadji Reshid Aga, who, as I mentioned in my despatch of the 7th instant, had been brought here by the Governor from that place, and who is, as I have said before, one of the greatest criminals in the vilayet. The Government, therefore, apparently approves of his conduct in ravaging the district of Silouan. At any rate the Kurds and Christians will not be slow to draw this inference from his not only escaping punishment but being brought back with honour by the Governor-General.

Another prominent Kurd named Osman Aga, who was chiefly responsible for the massacre of Siverek, has been trying to force the Christians to sign a document to the effect that he protected them and restored their stolen property to them.

Until these Kurds are dealt with, it is waste of money sending reform Commissions here; the local authorities would be perfectly capable of managing them if they were instructed to do so.

In the Vali's absence the Cadi is in charge of the vilayet. It is just as well that the Assistant Governor is not acting, as his doing so might have been taken as an excuse for a further outbreak on the part of the Moslems.

The vilayet in general is comparatively quiet now, but there are no signs of returning confidence or of any revival of trade. The financial situation is bad and not likely to improve for some time to come; the only direction in which the Government show any energy is in the collection of taxes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 146.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 191.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 6, 1896, 11 A.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Jeddah has telegraphed that it has been reported by returning vessels that Yambo was yesterday surrounded by Bedouins, some of whom entered the town. The Governor of the town was seriously wounded, and some pilgrims and soldiers were killed, in the general firing that ensued. The pilgrims bound for Medina are not able to leave. Mr. Alban adds that this has not yet been officially confirmed.

No. 147.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 195.)
(Telegraphic. P. *Constantinople, June 7, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 191 of the 6th instant, Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah has telegraphed with reference to his telegram of the 5th June, that it has been officially reported that the Bedouins came in order to threaten to attack the rest of the hospital on account of the machine for disinfecting, and that the disturbances were quelled by the troops, who killed three rioters and lost two men.

Mr. Alban adds that one battalion of troops was to proceed to Yambo from Jeddah on the 5th instant.

No. 148.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 423 A.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 29, 1896.*

I SPOKE to Tewfik Pasha yesterday in the sense of your Lordship's despatch No. 135 of the 17th instant, in regard to the dismissal of Foham Pasha from his post

as Mutessarif of Moush, and informed his Excellency that your Lordship was anxious to learn the exact causes which had led to his removal.

His Excellency replied that he did not know the reasons for Feham Pasha's dismissal which had been ordered entirely without his knowledge, and he added that Feham Pasha himself did not know why he had been recalled and had, on his arrival at Constantinople, come to him to complain of the treatment he had received.

I took the opportunity at the same interview of asking his Excellency whether the Commission, which was to proceed to Birejik to restore the church which had been turned into a mosque, had started from Marash.

Tewfik Pasha again replied that he knew nothing at all about it, and that all orders relating to the Birejik affair were sent directly from the Palace.

His Excellency's answers respecting these two cases illustrate very forcibly how powerless the Porte has become, and how difficult it is to transact business here through the ordinary diplomatic channels. On the other hand, if representations are made directly to the Palace, it is politely intimated that application should be made to the Porte, a complete deadlock being thus ingeniously created.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 149.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 424 B.)
My Lord, *Pera, May 29, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 182 of to-day, I have the honour to report that a meeting of the Representatives of the six Powers was held at the Austrian Embassy on the 27th instant to consider what further representations should be made to the Turkish Government in regard to their non-observance of the conditions of the Zeitoun arrangement. After some discussion it was decided that we should for the present confine ourselves to endeavouring to obtain the nomination of a Christian Kaïmakam, and press for the fulfilment of the other conditions later on if we were successful.

It was also agreed that we should all make separate and individual representations the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the following day.

I accordingly spoke to Tewfik Pasha yesterday, and earnestly appealed to him to proceed with the appointment at once. I warned his Excellency, at the same time, that if the Turkish Government did not keep their promises in regard to the Zeitoun arrangement, they might possibly find it useless in the future to appeal to the Great Powers to help them out of their difficulties.

Tewfik Pasha, after privately admitting that if he had had anything to do with it a Christian Kaïmakam would have been appointed long ago, replied in much the same manner as he did to the representations made by the six Dragomans on the 19th April, as reported in Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 341 of the 20th April, and gave no definite promise, but his Excellency stated that he would at once address a strong communication to the Palace on the subject.

I understand he answered my colleagues in the same evasive manner.

Should nothing be done in the next few days, there is to be another meeting of the six Representatives to discuss what further action should be taken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 150.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 425.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 2, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 421 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum, which I have received from Mr. Block, on the subject of the Kurdish Chiefs, Hussein, Emin, and Tamir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 150.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I HAVE read Mr. Graves' despatch of the 15th May concerning the Kurdish Chiefs, Hussein, Emin, and Tamir, to the Foreign Minister, and shown his Excellency how futile all reforms must be if such men are allowed to remain unpunished. His Excellency took note and said he would inquire into the matter.

(Signed) A. BLOCK.

No. 151.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 427.)
My Lord, *Pera, June 3, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 420 of the 28th ultimo on the subject of the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Van, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a *pro-memorid* which has been handed to Mr. Block by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in reply to the representations which were made to the Sublime Porte by Her Majesty's Embassy on the 23rd April on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 151.

Pro-Memorid.

LE Général de Division, Saadeddin Pacha, interpellé sur les renseignements contenus dans le *pro-memorid* de l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique en date du 11 Avril dernier (v. s.), touchant la situation dans le Vilayet de Van, télégraphie que ce sont les Arméniens qui cherchent à compromettre l'ordre et la sécurité publique.

En effet, à la suite de la répression des troubles dans la dite province une parfaite tranquillité y avait regné jusqu'au mois de Ramazan lorsque les agitateurs Arméniens ont recommencé leurs menées. Ainsi ils ont tué nuitamment un soldat d'un corps de garde et deux de leurs coreligionnaires de Van. La nouvelle d'après laquelle des meurtres auraient été commis par des Kurdes est absolument fausse. Quelques-uns de ces derniers ont, il est vrai, commis dernièrement certains méfaits, mais il ne s'agit là que de délits de droit commun et les autorités Impériales ont déjà arrêtés les coupables et les ont consignés à la justice pour être punis conformément à la loi. Il est établi que la plupart des crimes perpétrés et des faits de nature à troubler l'ordre sont commis par les Arméniens eux-mêmes, qui ne les attribuent aux Kurdes que pour soulever l'opinion publique contre eux. C'est dans le même but qu'ils ne cessent de répandre toutes sortes de bruits alarmants. Ainsi tout dernièrement encore, les Arméniens du village de Kassim Oghlou ont prétendu que les Kurdes s'étaient réunis aux environs de leur village pour les attaquer; mais Saadeddin Pacha, qui s'était rendu immédiatement sur les lieux avec un détachement de troupes Impériales, n'avait rencontré aucun Kurde dans ces parages.

L'assertion d'après laquelle le nombre des nécessiteux se trouvant à Van s'élèverait à 10,000 est aussi singulièrement exagérée.

Parmi les villageois Arméniens qui s'étaient rendus dernièrement dans cette ville pour y recevoir des subsides, un grand nombre n'avait eu à subir aucun dommage du chef des désordres et plusieurs jouissent même d'une certaine aisance.

Comme les Arméniens de Perse passent de temps à autre sur le territoire Ottoman pour y fomenter des troubles et que leurs coreligionnaires de Turquie se rendent en Perse dans le but de s'y procurer des armes, des troupes ont dû être postées le long de la frontière pour y exercer une surveillance sévère.

D'ailleurs, les autorités Impériales ont pris toutes les dispositions propres à assurer le maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité dans le vilayet et à prévenir tout nouvel incident.

5,000 livres ont été déjà envoyées aux dites autorités pour les besoins locaux.

No. 152.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 428.)
My Lord, *Pera, June 3, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, reporting robberies committed by the Kurds of Sasoun, and the inaction of the authorities in the matter.

I shall not fail to bring these facts, as reported by Mr. Hampson, to the notice of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 152.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Moush, May 11, 1896.*

AS I had the honour to inform your Excellency in my telegrams of the 9th instant, Kurds of Sasoun last week took 430 piastres from Hitenk, one of the relieved villages, by threats of sacking the village.

I at once brought the matter to the notice of the Acting Mutessarif, and requested that he would formally assure me that the money should be restored. While saying that he would inquire into the matter, he declined to make me any promise as to the restitution of the money; basing his refusal on the grounds that, now that the distribution of relief in Sasoun was ended, I had no right to interfere formally on behalf of the inhabitants of that district, who, if they had any complaints to make, must present petitions to the Government themselves.

I replied that, though it was true that the distribution was ended, yet the money taken from Hitenk was English money; that I could not see the relief we had given to the destitute Armenians seized by Kurds without energetic protest; and that I must decline to admit that, under such circumstances, I had no right to make formal representations to the Government.

I added that I considered it of the utmost importance that the Kurds should be forced at once to restore this money; otherwise their example would be followed by others, and all the work the Relief Committee had accomplished in Sasoun would be annihilated.

The Acting Mutessarif again said that he would take steps, but that he denied any right to interfere officially.

I had already been led to expect that the authorities were about to adopt some such attitude, as they had been making inquiries whether I still claimed any right to the protection of the people of Sasoun, expressing their intention of summoning many of them to Moush, under the warrants forwarded in my despatch of the 28th April, and forcing them, at least, to formally declare their submission to the local Government.

Meanwhile, the Kurds are very threatening in Sasoun and Talori, committing many small robberies, and collecting the usual tribute ("hafir"). I fear there will be much trouble unless energetic steps are taken; and I have some reason to believe that the Government, if not actively encouraging, is at least not entirely averse to such trouble, as they deeply resent the position which they were forced to accept in regard to the distribution of relief. The nomad Kurds will also be moving in about a month; and it is urgent that some effective measures should be taken to protect Sasoun against them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 153.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 429.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 2, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, reporting the dismissal of the Mudir of Avsakbur, who has been replaced by an uncle of the notorious Moussa Bey, and other appointments of Mukhtars in the district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 153.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Moush, May 12, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th September last, I have the honour to report that the Mudir of Avsakbur, who replaced the official dismissed on my complaints, and who, since his nomination has distinguished himself by his good administration, has now in his turn been dismissed, and an uncle of the notorious Moussa Bey named Mudir in his place. The latter's rule has already been marked by the murder of Miro, as reported in my despatch of the 4th instant, which the Mudir is said to have arranged himself.

On the other hand the Mudir of Avram, who has continued all the abuses of his predecessor, retains his position.

The nomination of Mukhtars in the villages is proceeding on the usual lines of bribery and favouritism, without any regard to the fitness of the individual named, or to the wishes of villagers.

The Acting Mutessarif ordered an Armenian member of the Council to give him the names of six Armenians of Moush to be appointed zaptiehs, at the same time warning him that they must be free from all suspicions on the part of the authorities. Ohannes Aga replied that, under such conditions, it was impossible for him to furnish even six names, as if not previously suspects, the fact of his having named them would cause them to become so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 154.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 430.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 2, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting rumours of wide-spread disaffection among the troops in the district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 154.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Damascus, May* 18, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to state, for your Excellency's information, that I learnt yesterday, on good authority, that Edham Pasha, Commandant of the Aleppo district, telegraphed to the Acting Mushir, Omar Pasha, to the effect that he required 10,000 troops, to be raised from the "Ikhtiat," to replace various battalions under his orders in the south of Asia Minor and the Antioch district (where, as I understand, there are considerable numbers of troops massed) of whose fidelity he entertained doubts.

The Mushir replied that he could not raise more than 2,000 "Ikhtiat," and the matter was referred to Constantinople.

My informant went on to say that the military authorities were very uneasy with regard to the fidelity of the troops in general.

I am aware that there is a very wide-spread feeling of disaffection among the junior officers of the Vth Army Corps, but I have hitherto had no reason to believe that this disaffection had extended to the rank and file.

I said above that my authority was good, and it is certain that my informant, who is a man of revolutionary tendencies, has extraordinary means of access to the most private information, as I have frequently had occasion to attest, but at the same time I cannot vouch for the truth of the above statement. It is, however, in my humble judgment, sufficiently important to be worth while reporting with reserve to your Excellency.

My informant also stated the propaganda of the "Young Turkey" Party was making great strides among the army and also among civilians, especially in Beyrout and Jerusalem. In Damascus the party has but few adherents.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 155.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 432.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 2, 1896.

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 276 of the 13th April, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, reporting on the sentences passed on the Armenians arrested as revolutionists, and on the general situation in the district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 155.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Moush, May* 4, 1896.

AS I had the honour to inform your Excellency in my telegram of the 30th ultimo, sentences have been recently passed by the Tribunals here on twelve Armenians arrested as revolutionists, as reported in my despatches of the 2nd and 20th March.

The first arrests were made in consequence of the search for the murderers of the priest Parsigh. These have, however, made good their escape; and those now

sentenced were accused as members of the "Hinchak" Society, by the orders of which the murder was undoubtedly committed. The sentences are of death, or 101 years in seven cases; and of terms of from twelve years to eight months in the other cases, among the latter being a priest of Arakel Monastery. I think there is no doubt that five or six of the prisoners are members of the "Hinchak" Society, their leader being a compatriot and companion of "Mourad;" but they were at present quiet, and some of the others had committed no fault that I can learn.

A few days ago an Armenian of the plain was murdered by the relations of the notorious Moussa Bey, against whom he had given evidence. The authorities are acting with energy in the matter. The followers of the Kurdish Chief, Halil Gha, have been giving much trouble in Sasoun, threatening to murder one of our relief agents, &c. On my representations, the Acting Mutessarif has summoned Halil to Moush, and promises to take effective guarantees from him for his good behaviour and that of his followers.

So far the Acting Mutessarif is showing energy and great promptness in adopting any suggestions which I make to him. He probably hopes to be confirmed in the position. Meanwhile, the result is good; and as the new military Commander, Rohn-eddin Pasha, appears to be an enlightened, honest, and active officer, I hope that for the present all will go on well.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 156.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 433.)

My Lord, *Pera, June* 3, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, requesting instructions as to how far he should act in protecting and assisting American and Russian subjects, who it would appear have lately been appealing to him for help.

The United States' Chargé d'Affaires having a few days ago asked as a favour that Mr. Fontana should represent American interests in Kharput until an American Consul should be appointed there, and having obtained the necessary permission from the Porte, I have authorized Mr. Fontana to do so, but I have at the same time informed him that I see no reason why he should extend his protection to Russian subjects unless the Russian Embassy here make a similar request to that of the United States' Charge d'Affaires.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 156.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May* 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that since my arrival in Kharput several Armenians, claiming American or Russian nationality, have requested me, at different times, to make representations to the Vali on their behalf. I have accordingly mentioned their cases to him, and propose sending on the Petitions they have addressed me to the American Legation or the Russian Embassy, according to the nationality claimed by the petitioners.

The Vali tells me that, although he is ready to hear anything I may have to say unofficially in such instances, he cannot, in general, recognize any official interference on my part in favour of foreign subjects other than British.

Under these circumstances I would request your Excellency's instructions as to

how far I may act for the protection and assistance of the subjects in question, and more especially of the staff of the American mission here.

Hitherto I have aided these gentlemen when requisite to the best of my ability; but any action of mine on their behalf might, I would submit, be considerably strengthened were my right to take such action officially recognized by the Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. FONTANA.

No. 157.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 435.)
My Lord, *Pera, June 3, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the appropriation for taxes of the relief-money by the Turkish authorities in the vilayet, and the claims for "Virghin" made upon villages looted by Mussulmans during the recent disturbances.

I have brought the contents of these despatches to the notice of the Foreign Minister, at the same time pointing out what an exceedingly bad effect this action on the part of the authorities would produce if known in England. I have also requested him to telegraph to the Vali of Maamouret-el-Aziz to remit the taxes as much as possible in view of the destitute condition of the villages. It is highly probable that, in spite of all orders sent from here, the tax collectors will continue to press the Armenian villages for money, and that the authorities will forcibly appropriate any cash received by indigent Armenians from the Relief Fund. I have therefore suggested to Mr. Whittall, the Chairman of the Relief Committee in Constantinople, that the relief agents should restrict themselves to giving clothes, agricultural tools, food, seed, &c., which would not at once be confiscated by the authorities, and would enable the villagers to set to work to save themselves from starvation in the future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 157.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May 4, 1896.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 18th ultimo instructing me to investigate and report upon the alleged appropriation by the Kharput authorities of relief funds distributed to indigent Armenians upon the pretext of taxes due by the latter to the Government, I have the honour herewith to inclose a list of cases in point which have been brought to my notice as having occurred in the vilayet, and I propose presenting a translation in Turkish of this inclosure to the Vali, with the request that he will do what is necessary in the matter.

In many instances it would appear that the villagers, after receiving relief from their district Commission and returning to their villages, have been followed by a zaptieh sent after them by the Kaïmakam and forced to hand over the whole of the money thus received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 157.

STATEMENT of Money received from Relief Fund, and paid to Collectors of Taxes.

Names of Recipients.	First Relief Payment.		Second Relief Payment.	
	Received.	Paid.	Received.	Paid.
1. *Upper Sheikh Hadji.*	Piastres.	Piastres.	Piastres.	Piastres.
Kokoets Kirogos	20	20	20	10
,, Sarkis	40	20	30	20
,, Yeghsik	40	10	20	10
Kutulenz Khachadar	30	10	30	15
Chakharetz	40	15	30	10
Teghvenk	40	20	30	10
Murekh Asdur	20	20	20	10
Bayaji Garabet	60	40	60	30
Bijvenk	70	20	40	30
Khoshmatly	30	20	40	30
Malan Bedros	30	15	20	10
Margos Krikos	20	10	20	10
Tjartik	30	20	20	10
Tonos	30	10	30	10
Simon	20	20	20	10
Tato Ovan	20	20	20	10
Conyunuji Var	10	..	10	10
Arko Khacho	10	10	10	10
Mulko Ovanes	20	20	4	..
,, Maroub	20	10	40	30
Najar Bedros	10	10	10	10
Kolo Vartig	10	..	10	10
Buzili Bedros	30	20	..	..
Antaram	40	20	40	30
Maghab Ovakin	20	20	20	10
Portios	10	10	10	5
Kharnduigh	30	20	30	15
Bando	10	10	10	10
Kulo Sarkis	10	10	10	10
Tezi Gostun	20	15	20	10
Aved Kirkos	20	15	20	15
Najar Garabet	20	15	20	10
Pari Ovanes	20	10	20	10
Meli Ovanes	30	20	30	15
Mukhei Matook	40	20	40	30
Maghak	30	20	30	20
Gozji	60	40	30	40
Dédé	80	30	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mandiro	60	25	30	20
Dono	..	..	30	20
Mato Tavit	..	..	70	60
Kuyunuji Kirkos	..	..	40	30
Gurbik Kirogos	..	..	60	[illegible]
Bedre	..	..	70	30
Khazab	..	..	40	30
Chaghchubam	..	..	70	50
Toro Khacho	..	..	20	20
Beyaji B. dros	..	..	30	25
Aved Gasparian	..	..	60	40
Gars Ovanes	..	..	40	25
Jamgoch Ovan	..	..	30	20
Beyaji Boghos	..	..	10	10
Koko Muncho	..	..	30	20
Kharlachi Vart	..	..	60	30
,, Agob	..	..	30	30
Kuzih Boso	..	..	80	40

Names of Recipients.	Received Relief.	Paid.	Remarks.
2. *Mouri.*	Piastres.	Piastres.	
Apo Khaiajiu	45	20	
Ando Krikos	35	20	
Ohan Simonian	50	25	
Deho Garpas	60	60	
Ohan Pilibosian	60	60	
Gageonk	70	43	
Karaebel Kirpo	35	17	
,, Manuk	25	20	Paid to Tahsildar Mehmet Effendi.
Kuzir Boghos	35	20	
,, Sarkis	40	40	
Gulkhas Garo	20	10	
Najar Kirkos	25	12	
Kuzir Yegho	70	58	
Avak	40	40	
Nerses	50	18	
Manna Krikorian	15	15	
Villages in Char Sanjak—			
3. *Kuchi.*			
Avak Jerian	60	60	Received and paid over in two instalments.
Abraham Shohinian ..	200	200	
4. *Tel.*			
Titli Ohannes	210	210	
5. *Peri.*			
Pegakli Margarios ..	600	600	
6. *Sartorieh.*			
Sefer	70	70	

Names of Recipients.	Money paid to Collectors by them	Remarks.
7. *Tchmeh.*	Piastres.	
Gehik Kehya	10	Ermo Bado, Kamina Arud, Keyunji Agop, Kevoeta Arakil, and Kamina Setrak paid in all over 61 piastres.
Mardo Bedros	10	
Chutji Khugas	15	
Tarhji Sarkis	15	
Chaté Asdur	5	
Chutji Ohannes	15	
Atam Marsub	19	
Geghazar	20	
Kural Moyses	10	
Najar Mardo	9½	
,, Ohan	9½	
Kuyunji Bedros	15	
,, Setrak	20	
Kakemes Avo Giragos	25	
Chelpe Ghugas	20	
Mirakotz Bedros	19	
Najia	19	
Kamina Kiragos	19	
Madenli Manuka	4½	
Mürig Zadur	15	

Inclosure 3 in No. 157.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May* 8, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following details in continuation of my telegram to your Excellency of the 6th instant, reporting that the Government was endeavouring to levy taxes upon the impoverished population of numerous villages in this Caza, which had been pillaged by the Moslems during the recent disorders.

I have talked with a number of Armenians from the villages of Arozik, Shemsheli, Ah-Meziré, Carash-Recci, and Sheikh Hadji, and have received petitions signed by villagers of Hoch Recci, Ashvan, Peri, Vaskerd Recci, Tchmé, and Balishir. The various statements made and petitions addressed to me are to the same effect, viz., that the Christian population of the villages referred to, although reduced to a state of great poverty, are now called upon to pay taxes for the current year, in addition to, in some instances, the arrears claimed for past years.

The Mukhtar of Shemsheli, an Armenian named Asadour, came himself to see me, and stated that he had been ordered by the authorities to collect from his Christian fellow villagers, those subject to taxation amounting in all to 135 men, the sum of 4,000 piastres on account of Bedel Askeri, Temettu, and Arazi Virghinson for this year alone; together with 1,000 piastres arrears of taxes for past years; that all the Armenian houses at Shemsheli had been looted, and that, as the people were quite unable to pay the amount demanded, he had fled to Meziré for safety.

Asadour further informed me that the Government had distributed 50 okes of grain in his village, and had promised 60 okes more, and that most of the indigent families there had also received assistance from the Relief Committee at Kharput.

The fact of arrears of taxes being claimed would appear at the present moment more particularly unjust. The villagers have, for the most part, lost, together with the rest of their property, the "senedş" or receipts given them by the tax-collectors in former years, and have thus no longer the means of proving any past payments made by them.

I have brought this matter to the notice of the Vali, dwelling upon the unreasonableness of exacting taxes from men who have just received relief in the form of food material for themselves and their families from the Government itself. The Vali replied that he could not suspend the collection of the taxes in the various villages without express orders from Constantinople to that effect; but that he would give directions for the collection to be with lenity and discrimination. Such measures, however, are not likely, I would submit, to be productive of any great result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

No. 158.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 8.)

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Admiralty, June* 8, 1896.

WITH reference to my letter of the 6th instant, in reply to your communication of the 4th instant, respecting the departure of Her Majesty's ship "Howe" from Alexandretta, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will inform the Secretary of State that the following telegram has been received from the Commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean Station reporting on the matter in question.

"No special report on subject received since my telegram of the 24th May, but have every confidence that Captain of "Howe," in proposing present cruise to Beirût, has satisfied himself that no untoward event is likely to be precipitated by temporary absence."

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

No. 159.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury. —(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 196.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 8, 1896, 11·10 A.M.

A REQUEST has been made by the Turkish Ambassadors at Berlin and Rome that the German and Italian Ambassadors in Constantinople should be instructed, in view of alleged recent excesses committed by Zeitounlis, to desist from insisting on the appointment of a Christian Governor at Zeitoun.

In reply they have both been told that the six Representatives at Constantinople have entire charge of the matter. Costaki Pasha has, I presume, made a similar communication to your Lordship.

No. 160.

Foreign Office to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 91.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 9, 1896.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 188 of the 3rd June, I have to inform you that the Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean reports that Her Majesty's ship "Howe" has gone for a cruise to Beyrout. The Admiral feels confident that Captain Stopford satisfied himself that no danger would arise in consequence of his temporary absence from Alexandretta.

You should inform the Vice-Consul there accordingly.

No. 161.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 201.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 10, 1896, 12 A.M.

A FURTHER representation in respect to the Kaïmakam of Zeitoun is to be made to-day, through the Dragomans, by the six Embassies. Mr. Block was informed the day before yesterday by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in reply to Costaki Pasha's representations alluded to in my telegram No. 196 of the 8th instant, your Lordship stated that Her Majesty's Government had no wish to see the disturbances at Zeitoun renewed, and that a Christian Kaïmakam might be named when the other Christian Governors, in the provinces of Anatolia, were appointed.

No. 162.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 202.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 10, 1896, 11.45 A.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Aleppo has telegraphed that he is informed that the position of affairs is extremely critical at Besni, and that an attack by the Kurds is feared. A renewal of the disturbances is also apprehended in Aintab.

No. 163.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 91.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1896.

WITH reference to your telegrams Nos. 196 and 201, I have to inform you that the Turkish Ambassador has not reported quite accurately my answer to his communication with regard to the appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam at Zeitoun. He stated on the 3rd June that though the appointment must be postponed until the antagonism of creeds and races was appeased, the Turkish Government fully intended to fulfil their pledge.

I recalled to his Excellency the solemn obligations taken by the Sultan, and said that Her Majesty's Government looked to his honour, which His Majesty must protect by being faithful to his engagements.

I said, however, that I would not take the responsibility of pressing for any precipitate action, from which, in the judgment of the Sultan, a renewal of massacres would result.

No. 164.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 14.)

(No. 206.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 14, 1896, 11.45 A.M.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 94 of the 11th instant, I have given the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs correct version of the language used by your Lordship.

Tewfik Pasha did not hold out any hope of the appointment for the present of a Christian Kaïmakam.

No. 165.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 15.)

(No. 440.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 5, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, inclosing the statements of Kurds with regard to the recent disturbances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 165.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May* 19, 1896.

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to your Excellency précis in Turkish with translation of statements made at their own request by Kurds in my presence, and bearing their seals; the first has reference to the raid made upon the Kharput Caza by the Kurds, in which Hadji Khalil Aga played a prominent part; the second statement refers to an attack organized upon the Kizil-bashi Kurds of the Agcha Tagh district, who refused to participate in the attack upon the Armenians of Malattia.

An official of rank in this town, who called upon me to-day, began of his own accord to speak of the massacre of Kizil-bashis at Agcha Tagh, and in the course of our conversation he confirmed, in the main, the details set forth in the statement of Ibrahim Oglou Khalil herein inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 165.

Statement bearing Seals of Seven Kurds of Ziva.

(Translation.)

HADJI KHALIL AGA of Kizil Ushaghi, a village in the nahié of Ziva, five months ago, gathered some 2,000 Kurds of his clan, and, hoisting his flag, made a raid upon the Caza of Kharput and the neighbouring villages. He set fire to houses, killed, plundered, and did other evil; and he afterwards openly gave out to the villagers he met with that he had himself cut to pieces with his own hand Artin Effendi Atnalian, a prominent Kharput trader, adding, "Such is the command of our Padishah; see that you do likewise." By thus exciting the Kurds he had given rise to the recent troubles

From among 360 oxen and cows, together with plunder of all sorts, impossible to specify here, collected by him from the villages of Zerki, Derijan, and Bereté, in the Caza of Keban, and from other places; he handed over only 216 head of cattle to the authorities; the remainder are retained by his associates. This statement we make in the name of common right and justice.

(Seal.) (Signed) BULUKANLON KIEL HASSAN OGLOU YUSSUF.
(Seal.) HADJI HASSAN AGA ZADE ALI.
(Seal.) HADJI MEHEMET AGA ZADE ALI.
(Seal.) HADJI ARAB AGA ZADE HADJI ALI.
(Seal.) COURMAMOLI MOLLAH MOUSSA OGLOU IBRAHIM.
(Seal.) MANZONE ZADE MUSTAFA AGANIN OGLOU HASSAN.
(Seal.) SIMIKANLI MOLLAH UMER OGLOU ALI.

May 7, 1896.

Statement bearing Seal of a Kizil-bashi Kurd from the Village of Bekir Ushaghi, in the Nahié of Aycha Tagh.

(Translation.)

I AM from the village of Bekir Ushaghi in the nahié of Aycha Tagh, Mutessariflik of Malattia. Some days before the disturbance in that town Heririji Zade Abdullah Aga, Member of the Malattia Idaré Mejlissi (Administrative Council), sent us a letter inviting us to attack the Malattia Armenians. We took no notice, however, knowing the contents of the letter to be contrary to common justice.

Some days after the disturbance the official in question, declaring that we had made an agreement with the Armenians, sent Yuz Bashi Shukri Effendi of Malattia with his followers to take back the letter, which we gave back, when demanded, without hesitation. A day or two later upwards of a battalion of troops, together with Bey Beki Senim Oglou Hadji Mehmet, Kiur Hussein, and Beshik Agas (of our nahié and belonging to the Kiurme and San Hadji tribes), accompanied by their followers and 3,000 Kurds they had assembled from other places, attacked the twenty-five villages specified here below. They plundered everything we had, slew 900 people and children, and treated us with outrage. Of the survivors eighteen poor villagers were arrested, and have lain ever since in prison, hungry and shivering. As this state of things is incompatible with justice and mercy, we beg that, in pity for our trouble, what is necessary may be done to help us.

One of the people of the above Nahié,

(Seal.) (Signed) IBRAHIM OGLOU KHALIL.

May 12, 1896.

Villages.

Bekir Ushaghi, Harin, Hadji, Uksuz, Kerkez, Kepez, Genjeli, Kelenli, Ghiursulimanli, Kassim, Kobat, Tumukli, Khanjarli, Kadir, Bayram, Tatar, Chelpkenli, Shemrikli, Zenkli, Chakir, Mehmet, Buyuk Koni, Elias, Alhasli, Sinimili.

No. 166.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 441.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 5, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 435 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the action taken by the Vali with regard to the levying of "Virghin" upon the Armenian peasantry whose houses have been looted and burnt in the course of the late disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 166.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Kharput, May* 18, 1896.

IN continuation of my despatch to your Excellency No. 6 of the 8th instant, reporting that the Government was endeavouring to levy "Virghin" upon the Armenian peasantry whose villages and houses had been looted and burned in the course of the late disturbances in this vilayet, I now have the honour to report that a number of Armenians from different villages accompanied me a few days ago to the konak, and specified to the Vali in my presence the sums demanded from them by the tax-collectors, declaring at the same time their inability to meet those demands.

The Vali thereupon summoned an official and ordered him to take down the statements of these men, and to send instructions to the tax-gathers that taxes should only be levied from "Kudret Olanlar," such persons as were in a position to pay them.

The action taken by the Governor-General in this matter may, or may not, prove beneficial to individual sufferers. Since our interview, however, fresh complaints have reached me from various villages with regard to the Virghin claimed, and the ill-treatment of those who were unable to pay the same; and the only possible solution of the question in general would appear to lie in the temporary exemption from taxation of all such villages as have suffered heavily in the recent troubles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

No. 167.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 442.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 5, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, inclosing extracts from letters with reference to the participation of the Turkish troops in the massacre at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 167.

Acting Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Kharput,* , 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit extracts copied from letters together with translation addressed by a soldier stationed at Erzeroum to his brother at Kharput, having reference to the participation of the troops in the massacre in the former town.

These letters one of which bore the seal of the writer, Hafiz Mahomet, were recently shown to a member of the American Mission here. That gentleman, in whose judgment and discrimination great confidence may, I think, be placed, has no doubt whatsoever as to their authenticity, and he has been good enough to furnish me with the extracts in Turkish, which form Inclosure 1 of this despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 167.

Extracts from a letter written from Erzeroum by a Private named Hafiz Mahomet, native of Kharput, to his brother Tewfik Aga, in the latter town.

(Translation.)

IF you ask about the troops there are forty-six battalions of us on service. Our battalion you must know consists of 126 men, and now they have called out the Redifs and Ikhtiat. I think to myself, "Ah, if only I had been there!" Here there were a certain number of Armenians whom I killed like dogs. If you ask for news in this matter we slew 2,500 Armenians and looted their goods, the whole of which we handed over to the Government. At the present moment the situation is disturbed; this for your information. For the last four months we have not lain down; our cartridge-belts are round our waists with our cartridge-cases and our rifles between our knees. All night we pass seven hours on duty, and do four hours patrol work by day. In the whole world there is not such a vile place as Erzeroum. There has just been a heavy fall of snow.

Your brother,

(Seal.) (Signed) HAFIZ MAHOMET,
25th Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 4th Company.

11th Kianon Evel (*December* 23, 1895).

Inclosure 3 in No. 167.

Extract from another Letter evidently written by Hafiz Mahomet in reply to one received from his brother, dated 11th Teshrni Sani (*November* 23, 1895).

(Translation.)

MY brother, if you want news from here, we have killed 1,200 Armenians, all of them as food for the dogs. For thirty days past their shops have been shut. Mother, I am safe and sound. Father, twenty days ago we made war on the Armenian unbelievers; through God's grace no harm befell us. Brother, I myself fired forty-seven cartridges. There is a rumour on foot that our battalion will be ordered to your part of the world, if so we will kill all the Armenians there. Brother, we made war, in short, for four days. Thirty days ago we made war with the Armenians, and 1,200 we slew. Besides these 511 Armenians were wounded, one or two perish every day.

If you ask after the soldiers and Bashi-Bazouks, not one of their noses has bled. One sergeant died; thanks be (*sic*), nothing else happened. One thing more. I learnt my drill by heart in four days, but seven days ago they began to teach us the Ourus (Russian?) drill. May God bless you.

(The date and signature torn off, but the handwriting that of Hafiz Mahomet.)

No. 168.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 443.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1896.*

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 151 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo on the subject of the release of thirty-one Armenians of Aintab from the Aleppo prison.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 168.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Aleppo, May 18, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 12th instant, reporting the release of thirty-one Armenians of Aintab from the Aleppo prison, and to inform your Excellency that these were the so-called political prisoners as distinguished from thirty-four, who remain in prison here, charged with criminal offences.

Two of those released, Pastor Kara Krikor and Dr. Kurkjic, have been the subject of unofficial representations made by this Consulate to the Governor-General, and Dr. Kurkjic called upon me this morning to express his thanks for our assistance.

He informed me that, whereas they had suffered much while in prison at Aintab, owing to the insanitary state of the building, they had been in every respect well treated while in prison here. No attempt had been made by any of the officials to extort money from them under pretence of obtaining their release, as was currently reported to be the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 169.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 444.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 168 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum which I have received from Mr. Block, First Dragoman of Her Majesty's Embassy, giving the reply made by the Porte to the representations which were made on the subject of the dangerous state of affairs at Alexandretta on account of the claims of time-expired soldiers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

REPORTS having reached certain Embassies to the effect that if the settlement of the claims of the time-expired soldiers landed at Alexandretta will be longer delayed, they will plunder the town, and this intelligence having been brought to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Grand Vizier had placed himself in communication with the Vali of Aleppo and the Minister of Finance. From the answers received it would appear that, although it was decided that these soldiers should receive ten months of arrears of salary in reaching their landing places, and should be paid when they reach their homes, still they claimed the settlement in full of their arrears in landing at Alexandretta. Upon this, they received a larger sum of money than that which it was agreed to pay them, and they proceeded on their journey. The necessary funds have also been provided to meet their further claims. The above-mentioned intelligence was therefore due to an exaggerated report of the facts.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

No. 170.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 15.)

(No. 448.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 8, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting upon the concentration of troops and war-ships between Latakia and Pyas, and the construction of military posts in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 170.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Aleppo, May* 25, 1896.

WITH reference to Acting Consul Catoni's telegram of the 7th February last, reporting that an extraordinary meeting of Government officials had been in Aleppo, for the purpose of discussing a plan of fortifications to be erected at certain points on the Syrian coast, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that military posts (Noktas) are being constructed at Latakia, Suedia, Kara-duran, Scanderoon and Pyas, and that a force of from ten to twelve thousand of the reserves and some regulars, lately employed at Zeitoun, is now encamped at various points within the area indicated. When completed, these stations will be occupied by detachments of cavalry, and in the meantime the Government has given orders for the purchase of horses to mount the troops. These military posts are being constructed under the supervision of a Commission from Constantinople composed of officers from the Seraskeriat, Ordnance Department and Ministry of Marine, assisted by staff officers from Aleppo and Adana. In addition to these preparations on land, a flotilla has been formed and is now cruising along the coast. It consists of the vessels "Ismail," "Ziveri Derya," and "Caplan," and the torpedo-boats "Tayar," "Tair," and "Nassir."

Preparations on so extensive a scale, if made in any other country in the world, would suggest some great national danger, but in this case, I think, they are due solely to an ill-founded fear in the mind of His Majesty the Sultan that certain foreign Powers contemplate an occupation of the coast.

Ostensibly they are made for the purpose of preventing the landing of Armenian revolutionary agents and fire-arms, but, in Europe, an ordinary coast-guard service would be quite sufficient to meet this emergency. One cannot, therefore, but conjecture that the Government really attaches weight to the absurd rumours which have circulated in the vilayet, from time to time, of the appearance of suspicious looking vessels on the coast, said to contain hundreds of armed men. Such rumours have been telegraphed by the Vali to the Palace in all seriousness.

It is greatly to be desired that this accumulation of troops should cease as soon as possible, for there is a very dangerous spirit among the men.

Mr. Catoni had occasion to telegraph to your Excellency to report that there were 5,000 men in the neighbourhood of Alexandretta who were on the point of revolting, because they were not paid. Several of the men found their Commanding Officer in a public café, and declared to him that, if they were not paid within two or three days, they would pay themselves at the expense of the "Giaiours," a term, I would add, which has become the ordinary designation of Christians in this vilayet. The regular troops from the Aidin Vilayet informed their officers that, unless they were paid, they would at once disband and go home. Nor was the danger confined to threats, but much loss was incurred by the residents of Alexandretta whose gardens were plundered.

Therefore I am glad that Mr. Catoni promptly telegraphed to your Excellency asking for the presence of a ship of war; and Her Majesty's ship "Howe" having

arrived at Alexandretta, I hope that she will remain there so long as the troops remain under arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

P.S.—I learn that part of the troops in question have received their pay.
H. D. B.

No. 171.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 15.)

(No. 449.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 9, 1896.

WITH reference to Sir Philip Currie's despatch No. 367 of the 7th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, giving answers to the paper of questions on the execution of reforms, copy of which was sent to your Lordship in Sir P. Currie's above-mentioned despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 171.

Consul Graves to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May* 29, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith answers to the paper of questions inclosed in Sir Philip Currie's circular of the 8th May on the execution of reforms, which you will perceive are chiefly of a negative character.

I am informed by the Vali that projects dealing with most of the points of reform have been submitted by Shakir Pasha to the Porte, whose sanction is still awaited for their execution. I may add that, even if this sanction is obtained, the present deplorable state of the provincial finances must prove an almost insuperable obstacle to the carrying out of such reforms as involve fresh or increased expenditure of public funds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 171.

Memorandum.

Article 1.—Ibrahim Effendi, the Moavin of the Vali of Erzeroum, arrived here on the 28th ultimo, and has taken up his duties. In view of his local and administrative inexperience these duties are for the present confined to assisting the Vali in the transaction of current business, and reading and transmitting documents which pass between the Vali and the different Departments.

The impression among Moslems and Christians alike is, that the Moavin's appointment is a concession made for the sake of form only, but that he will exercise no real influence on the administration. His relations with the Vali appear to be cordial so far; I hear that the Turkish officials express some jealousy of his position, but maintain for the present an expectant attitude and treat him courteously.

Art. 2.—No such Moavins have yet been appointed, though I understand that Shakir Pasha has recommended Mr. Constantine Syngros, a Greek, now Agricultural Inspector at Erzeroum, for the post of Moavin of the Mutcssarif of Erzingian.

Arts. 3 and 4.—No. There are no Cazas in Erzeroum Vilayet where the Christian population is numerous enough to justify the appointment of Christian Kaïmakams.

Art. 5.—No steps have been taken to put this Article into practical execution, except as regards police and gendarmerie. See answers to Arts. 20–23.

Art. 6.—Sandjak and Caza Councils remain as before. I have no information yet as to the result of Shakir Pasha's inquiries.

Arts. 7-16.—Shakir Pasha's scheme for the redistribution of nahiés has been submitted to Constantinople, but no answer has yet been received on the subject. The Vali is opposed in principle to this reform, as complicated, expensive, and unpractical.

Art. 17.—The "Conseils des Anciens" remain as before.

Art. 19.—The Judicial Inspector for Erzeroum and Diarbekir remains at Diarbekir and has not yet visited Erzeroum. It was a mistake to appoint one Inspector for two provinces between which communications are so slow and so difficult.

There are still untried prisoners at Erzeroum, including the ten remaining Narman prisoners, who have been in gaol since the autumn of 1891, and whose irregular trial by court-martial in the spring of 1893 was quashed. I understand that there are also a number of untried prisoners in the sandjak and caza prisons.

No reforms have been introduced in the staff and general state of prisons; the condition of the prisoners continues to be most miserable, and the mortality among them enormous.

Arts. 20 and 21.—Shakir Pasha's scheme for police reorganization has been submitted to the Porte, and awaits Treasury sanction for the new salaries. Three Christian police officers and five Christian policemen have already taken up their duties at Erzeroum, but have as yet received no pay, and the Vali assures me that others have been designated for service in the sandjaks and cazas, and will be employed as soon as the Treasury sanction is obtained.

Arts. 22 and 23.—The answer to the preceding question applies to this also. Seven Christians have been enrolled as mounted zaptiehs, and five as foot zaptiehs in Erzeroum, out of 178 at which the figure of the Christian contingent was fixed in Shakir Pasha's scheme.

The Vali informs me that some others have offered themselves for service. But so long as the gendarmerie remain unpaid or many months in arrear of payment, it is idle to expect properly qualified Christians to offer themselves for service, since they would be unable to support themselves by preying on the population, as Mussulman zaptiehs are obliged to do in default of regular payment. As Vali in other provinces, Raouf Pasha has always been noted for his attention to this question, and for the consequent efficiency and discipline of his gendarmerie. But in Erzeroum the bankrupt condition of the provincial Treasury has so far prevented him from reorganizing the force.

Art. 24.—The execution of this Article must depend upon that of Arts. 7-16 dealing with the nahié system, of which it is only a detail.

Art. 25.—The condition of prisons is generally admitted to be deplorable and most insanitary, epidemic diseases being rife. Untried prisoners are not fed, but are supposed to be supported by their friends, who are frequently unable to feed them. Constant complaints have reached me of their ill-treatment in prison, and of their sufferings from disease, cold, damp, and overcrowding. No change has been made in these respects since the promulgation of reforms.

Art. 26.—No such Committees of Preliminary Inquiry have been formed, though they exist in theory under the Regulation for the General Administration of Vilayets, Arts. 11 and 12.

Art. 27.—No progress has been made with regard to the control of the Kurds, nor has Shakir Pasha taken any practical measures to that end.

The Regulations respecting "feuilles de route" and "port d'armes," as far as Kurds are concerned, appear to be universally disregarded.

Art. 28.—Hamidieh Kurds continue to carry arms (except in some of the large towns) and to wear their uniforms and badges as before. They have not been summoned for service or training this year, any more than in former years.

Whatever the judicial and civil authorities may say on the subject, Hamidieh Kurds habitually disregard civil authority and jurisdiction.

Art. 29.—No Commissions for revision of title deeds have been formed.

Art. 30.—Gendarmes are still so employed, a particular class of zaptieh being told off for "Tahsildar" duties.

Shakir Pasha's scheme for the creation of a corps of civilian "Tahsildars" was submitted last autumn to the Porte, and still awaits its sanction.

Art. 31.—No steps have been taken to reform the tithe system. Shakir Pasha's proposal to try a scheme of his own in the Caza of Baiburt during the current year as an experiment, has been submitted to the Porte, and still awaits its sanction.

Annex 1.—Shakir Pasha has, I believe, received every assistance from the Vali, Raouf Pasha, in the little he has attempted in the way of administrative reform. I understand, however, that the Mushir, Zeki Pasha, commanding the 4th Army Corps, has exerted his influence to hamper him in his endeavour to deal with some of the worst of the Kurd Chiefs, such as Hussein, Emin, and Timar Pashas, who are all Hamidieh officers and protégés of the Mushir.

Shakir Pasha has not yet been joined by his Moavin.

Annex 2.—Some prisoners, such as the ten remaining prisoners from Narman, at Erzeroum, and the Armoudan prisoners at Erzingian, who, in my opinion, ought to have benefited by the Amnesty, have been excepted from its operation, on the pretext that they are common law offenders and not political prisoners. The numerous Armenian prisoners lately condemned at Erzingian for alleged participation in the disturbances of last autumn, should also have been released, like those arrested at the same time in Erzeroum and Baiburt; although, of course, according to the letter of Annex 2 the Amnesty only applies to cases prior to the 23rd July, 1895. I blame the local influence of the Mushir, Zeki Pasha, for the exceptional severity with which the Erzingian Armenians have been treated, and his removal from Erzingian is desirable on all grounds.

Annex 3.—There has been no movement of return of Armenian emigrants into this district. On the contrary a large number have emigrated to Russia since the massacres, and thousands more would follow if they could. Of these, a few who failed to find work in Russia are now beginning to return.

No. 172.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 15.)

(No. 450.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 9, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 423 of the 28th May, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting on the bad administration of the Vali, and eulogizing the energy of Zia Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 172.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Diarbekir, May* 26, 1896.

AS I had the honour to inform you by telegram, there were renewed and alarming threats of massacre for Kurban Bairam, originating principally with Jemil Pasha and Talaat Effendi, the head of the municipality, both of whom were prominent instigators of the massacre of November last. These threats were repeated, not only in the town, but throughout the district of Diarbekir; and I am strongly disposed to think that a serious attempt would have been made to put them into execution, had it not been for the energetic conduct of Zia Pasha, the Military Commander, stimulated by the strict orders which, owing to your action, were sent from Constantinople. That officer paraded the streets day and night in person, practically doing police duty, and disarming and intimidating any suspicious characters whom he found. His conduct has been most praiseworthy, and, had it not been for his presence, there would have been little security for any one in Diarbekir after the departure of Abdullah Pasha, as there is no other official who can be depended on.

I had hoped that in the last two months the excitement among the Moslems had so far quieted down that there would be no further talk of massacre, but unfortunately this is far from being the case, and the same individuals who were

concerned in the last affair are apparently only waiting for an opportunity to begin again.

I attribute this, in the first place, to the impunity they have enjoyed, and secondly, to the continuance of the Vali, Ennis Pasha, in his post, he being really considered as the chief of the disturbers of the peace. The conduct of his Excellency in going to Farkin in company with Haʻji Reshid Aga, notoriously one of the worst Kurds in the vilayet (*vide* my despatch No. 9 of the 13th instant), and remaining there thoughout Bairam is certainly not calculated to inspire a belief in his desire to maintain order.

There seems to be also an idea among the Turks that the final upshot of the present situation will not be favourable to them as a ruling race, and consequently the disorderly element argues that another attack on the Christians would put them in no worse position than they are already. The more intelligent are also exasperated at the ineptitude of the local administration. At the present time when the most crying needs are the rebuilding of the bazaars and the burnt villages, the authorities have begun making a road to Sairt, the ostensible object of the Vali's visit to Farkin being to start the work; the unfortunate villagers, who ought to be employed in rebuilding their homes, are being forced to work gratis on the road or pay the road-tax; many of them are too feeble in health to work, and therefore have to pay the tax out of the charity they have received from abroad.

In some places the Kurds are trying to force the Christians to make over their lands to them on condition of rebuilding their houses for them; this would reduce them to the condition of serfs; but I scarcely see on what other terms thousands of the Christians will have any chance of maintaining themselves. Even where there is any harvest to reap, many of them have neither implements, nor cattle, nor place to store the harvest, and it seems impossible that they should be able to subsist another winter under present conditions.

These remarks apply more particularly to the districts of Palou, Lidga, Hainé, Silouan, Bisherri, and Bahremki. The Mudir of the latter district, one Aziz Effendi, a native of Diarbekir, is said to be particularly hostile to Christians; there are few left in his district, most of them having had their villages burnt, and fled to other districts; those who remain dare not avow themselves Christians.

A certain number of Christians have emigrated, chiefly from the town, and many more would do so if they had the means.

It is hopeless to look for any change for the better as long as Ennis Pasha is Vali; he is looked upon as an accomplice by the promoters of disorder, owing to his conduct during the three days' massacre and pillage in November, and the character of his administration during the two years he has been here. If the appointment as Vali of Zia Pasha, the Military Commander, and a former Military Attaché at St. Petersburgh, could be obtained, it would give great satisfaction to the population, and would be a real gain for the cause of law and order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 178.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 451.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 9, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that detachments of Hamidieh Cavalry have been ordered to Constantinople for service at the Palace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 173.

Consul Graves to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 28, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that orders have been received from the Mushir Commanding the 4th Army Corps for detachments of Hamidieh Cavalry to proceed to Constantinople for service at the Palace. As far as I can learn, they are to consist of one squadron (148 tobcs) each from four regiments belonging to Northern Kurdistan, and drawn from the Zirrecki, Hassananli, Haidaranli, and Karapapak tribes.

The Kurd Chiefs who are Kaïmakam of these regiments are respectively, Kouli Khan Bey, of Khinis, of the Zirreki tribe; Fethi Bey, of Melazgerd, Hassananli; Mehmed Effendi, of Alashgerd, Haidaranli; Tashdan Agha, of Alashgerd, Karapapak.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 174.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 453.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 9, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 441 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the action of the Vali with regard to the appropriation of relief funds for taxes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 174.

Acting Consul Fontana to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Kharput, May 23, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant, inclosing a list of the names of persons who, after receiving relief from the various Relief Commissions in this vilayet, had been compelled, according to their own statements, to hand over the whole or a part of the money thus received in payment of Virghin claimed; and to my telegram of the 6th instant reporting that measures to put a final stop to such abuses were urgently necessary. I now have the honour to report that in the course of an interview with the Vali, upon the latter date, I handed him a translation of the list referred to, with the request that he would investigate and take the necessary action in the matter.

This the Vali promised to do expressing, however, his doubts as to the possibility of the abuse having occurred so frequently; a few cases might, he said, have happened in which the tax-collectors were unaware that the sums levied by them had been given for relief purposes; and added that he would be glad to see some of the men whose names figured in the list before him.

I replied that a number of the men in question had themselves specified to me the sums paid from relief-money by them for Virghin, and that I would try to bring a few of them to the konak.

I subsequently sent for some eight or ten of these Armenians and asked them to meet me upon a certain day at the Government House, in order that they might state their grievances, in my presence, to the Vali. They promised to meet me there but, with one exception, failed, I regret to say, to keep their appointment. The Vali

assured me, however, that he would do all that was required, and since then I have heard of no further instances of the nature in point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 175.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 456.)
My Lord, *Pera, June* 10, 1896.

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 166 of the 18th May and your Lordship's reply No. 77 of the 20th, I have the honour to state that Mr. Fitzmaurice left Smyrna for Biredjik on the 30th ultimo to watch the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry which had been sent there.

I received yesterday a telegram from him, dated Aleppo, the 8th June, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, in which he reports that the Biredjik authorities state that the Commission visited that place some time ago, but proceeded thence to Adiaman. They knew nothing as to its present whereabouts or the probable date of its return, nor had the Vali received any instructions either as regards the Commission or himself.

On receipt of this telegram I at once dispatched Mr. Block, First Dragoman of the Embassy, to the Palace, where he saw the Sultan's First Secretary, and communicated to him the substance of Mr. Fitzmaurice's telegram, laying stress on the fact that the Commission had no business to leave Biredjik, seeing that the Sultan had informed Her Majesty's Embassy that it would remain there until confidence had been restored sufficiently to enable the converts to declare openly their real religious sentiments, and to perform religious worship in perfect security.

Tahsin Bey replied that the Vali of Aleppo had telegraphed that the Commission had, it was true, left Biredjik and gone to Hash Mansour (Adiaman), but that it had evidently done so owing to a misunderstanding of the instructions sent, which were to remain at Biredjik.

Further orders had in consequence been sent by telegraph to the Vali to direct the Commission to return at once to Biredjik and remain there.

I telegraphed the substance of Tahsin Bey's communication to Mr. Fitzmaurice, and instructed him to proceed with the Commission to Biredjik.

In reply to Mr. Block's inquiries as to whether the Commission had sent any Report of its impressions at Biredjik during its short stay there, Tahsin Bey stated that it had merely reported generally that the converts appeared unwilling to revert to Christianity.

Mr. Block saw the Grand Vizier in the afternoon, and related to him what had passed at the Palace.

He also asked him to instruct the Vali to give Mr. Fitzmaurice every facility to enable him to proceed to Biredjik with safety, and his Highness at once telegraphed accordingly. Mr. Fitzmaurice has since telegraphed that the Commission returned yesterday to Biredjik.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 175.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Mr. Herbert.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Aleppo, June* 8, 1896.

ARRIVED here yesterday.

Biredjikan authorities state that the Commission visited the place some time ago, and thence proceeded to Adiaman. They know nothing of its present whereabouts or when it will return there.

Vali declares he has no instructions regarding Commission or myself.

Awaiting instructions.

No. 176.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 459.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 10, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, forwarding a Report drawn up by the Rev. W. Christie on his visit to Birejik for the purpose of distributing relief. The inclosed has been communicated to Mr. Whittall, President of the Relief Committee here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 176.

Consul Barnham to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Aleppo, May* 20, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward in original a letter from the Rev. William Christie of Aleppo, describing a visit paid by him to Birejik, for the purpose of distributing clothing and necessaries to the victims of the massacre, and the failure of his mission owing to the hostility of the Mahommedan population. This gentleman recently went on similar duty to Killis, where he succeeded in relieving the wants of hundreds of destitute people. On both occasions the Consulate has taken all possible means of securing his safety, by procuring for him a letter of recommendation from the Vali to the Kaimakam and a proper escort; but Mr. Christie's Report shews that at Birejik the Mosloms are exceptionally fanatical, he was fired upon in the streets, and I am surprised and thankful that he returned alive. The Armenians of Birejik are in a truly pitiable condition, but no second attempt must be made to relieve them on the spot, and their only prospect of relief and safety is to escape to Aleppo in small parties as opportunity offers.

Mr. Christie's letter having reached me just before the departure of the post, there has been no time to prepare a copy, but one will be forwarded to your Excellency by next mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 176.

Rev. W. Christie to Consul Barnham.

Sir, *Aleppo, May* 20, 1896.

ACCORDING to instructions received from you I superintended the packing of 1,989 articles of clothing and forty-eight cooking utensils on Tuesday the 12th instant. These articles were sent on to Berejik, to be distributed by me among those who had suffered during the massacre there on the 1st January. I started the following day, accompanied by a native Christian attendant from Aleppo and two zaptiehs. We reached our destination on Thursday evening, and I immediately sent the Vali's letter to the Kaimakam, asking in return when it would be convenient for him that I should call. He answered that he would meet me in the Serai at 7 A.M. next morning (Friday, 15th), at which time I waited upon him, and was received with all due ceremony. Everything passed off smoothly, except that one of those present remarked that they wanted no help from foreigners. He was shown the Vali's letter, and then sulkily added that he had had no news of this matter. I was offered an empty house "rent free" for my few days' sojourn, expressed my gratitude, and, after examining its situation, agreed to reside in it, though I saw it was given to keep me more directly under the eye of the Government. I accepted merely to prevent giving offence, but suggested that I should prefer to distribute the articles in the Protestant church, *i.e.*, in the quarter occupied by the intended recipients, and to this a willing assent was given. It should be mentioned that during my visit to the Kaimakam, our room

at the Khan had been forcibly entered, though under guard of one of the zaptiehs. The rest of the day was spent in preparing a list and comparing it with that of the more needy cases handed to me at the Consulate. A few Armenians called on various pretexts, and were allowed to come and go. In the evening an Armenian whose wife cooked for us came to visit me, and stayed about an hour. As he was leaving, he was seized and detained by the zaptieh Kassak Chavuish, the one mentioned above as having failed in his duty at the Khan. Hearing accusations of Christianity and "fesâd" (sedition), I called the zaptieh, and asked for an explanation. He gave only rude responses, and had to be dismissed to his room, where he kept the Armenian till 1 A.M. Next morning (Saturday 16th) he expressed a desire that nothing be said about the matter, but on visiting the Kaïmakam I lodged a complaint with him. He summoned the zaptieh, who passed with a smiling face under the window where I sat, and a short time thereafter I was given to understand that he had been sent directly back to Aleppo. I complained because I saw that if this incident were passed over unnoticed no Armenian would dare to approach us. Judging from the man's good behaviour on the journey thither, I cannot but believe that he was influenced by some one in Berejik.

This forenoon, also, I learned that the Moslems were threatening the Armenians with death in the event of their accepting any of the articles brought. It was said that this would be the sign: whoever accepted would be looked upon as a Christian, and treated accordingly, while all who refused would be regarded as true Moslems. I further learned that Shakir Effendi (formerly an Armenian, by name Hachir Effendi Hudurian) sent yesterday to every Armenian house, and warned the inhabitants that whoever accepted anything, even in secret, should be slaughtered, and that he was the means of getting a "mushata" prepared, and forcing Armenians to sign it, declaring that they did not wish to take any of the articles sent.

These facts were related by many Armenians at different times, and with the invariable explanation that Shakir Effendi was acting for the Kaïmakam.

Up to this time the Baptist preacher had called thrice, and stayed for a short time on each occasion. He was then cross-questioned regarding his visits, and warned. The Armenians sent some Christian strangers who happened to be in the town to inform me of the state of matters. They, and all the other Armenians who had the opportunity to speak to me alone, informed me that the people wished to take because they were in the greatest need, but they dared not, and some even thought it would be better not to make any offer. I questioned and received the above reply from over fifty different individuals. I informed the Kaïmakam of their fear, but he discredited it, saying, they were proud, and had twice already refused aid.

In the afternoon, accompanied by my attendant and a local zaptieh, I walked up through the streets. As we passed along butchers and others gripped their knives firmly and looked savagely at my European hat. As we passed up the hill a number of Moslem boys (not of Armenian origin), aged from about twelve to sixteen, followed us, and made remarks evidently intended as insulting to us. I quietly drew the attention of the zaptieh to the fact, but he made light of it. He took me to the Armenian church, now a mosque, and after leaving it, suggested that we return by another road, which we accordingly did. When about 50 yards' distance from the Serai, I had in some way fallen two or three yards behind my attendants. Then (at 7·45, Turkish time) a pistol shot was fired by the boys mentioned above from a distance of about 15 yards. They stood firm together till I appealed to the zaptieh, when he made a show of running after them, but returned immediately, saying, "I know him." The affair was reported to the Kaïmakam, who remarked, "The work of children;" but promised to see into the cause; however, by the time we had left nothing had been done.

The goods having arrived, and the list being ready, I sent to inform the Kaïmakam, and to ask that I might see his list, which he had repeatedly promised, but never given. He appointed 7 A.M. (Sunday 17th) for the work, and said it should be produced then. We went at the time fixed. The Kaïmakam, instead of one agent, appointed nearly a dozen to accompany me. I raised no objection, resolved that if it were by any means possible the sufferers should be aided. I observed the Kaïmakam's list of forty-eight houses (now for the first time produced) contained the names of many in my own lists of the greatest and next degrees of need, and remarked, "We shall begin with your list." I was asked if I would give anything to the old Moslems (eski Muslimin), and answered that my instructions were to distribute to the "jeni Muslimin," *i.e.*, to those who were Christians last year.

A number of Members of "Commission" proceeded straight to the (American)

Protestant church, through the Armenian quarter. I went by the second road, after directing the bales to be brought on. When I reached the Armenian quarter, walking some distance in front of the zaptieh, crowds of men, women, and children appeared at the doors, and on the walls and house-tops, weeping, wringing their hands, crossing themselves, and beseeching me to do something to save them; then as the guard came forward, they shrank back in terror.

In front of the Armenian church a crier shouted in Turkish that all the "New Moslems" were to come and receive, but I could see from the Protestant church windows that he was at the same time mocking the women, grinning and laughing in their faces. I waited on, but no Armenian appeared. Then the Binbashi came and asserted that they did not fear in such a way as to show that he wished to pick a quarrel with me. He then tried to get my sanction to "bring them by the sword, give them by the sword, and then protect them by the sword." I said nothing should be done by the sword for me.

The explanation was then offered that the "New Moslems" were proud, and were not willing to accept anything unless the distribution be made to old and new alike. I told the Commission that evidently no one would come. They repeatedly declared that there was no fear, and no ground for it, and that the above explanation was the true one. I saw there was no use disputing with them, and retired.

The Kaïmakam asked me to unite with him in telegraphing for permission to distribute "generally," but I declined. Convinced of the impossibility of giving either now or in the immediate future, I ordered the bales back to Aleppo, and, seeing that our presence was likely to cause difficulties to the Armenians, we resolved to leave that evening. A number of bad-looking characters (evidently outsiders), some of them armed with old brass-mounted pistols, kept lounging about our door and courts till we went, but gave us no direct annoyance.

With the exception of one or two Armenian families connected with the Government, the Christians of Birejik have given only a passive submission to Islam, and that in many cases not so much to save their own lives as in the hope of saving the honour of their wives and daughters, whom they desire to send elsewhere and then go themselves. Armenians are being forced to yield up their daughters and even young girls in marriage and betrothal to Moslems. Moslems take Armenian women also "for a few days and then leave them." The people are in a state of the most abject misery, fearful poverty, and extreme need, and are tyrannized over in the most cruel manner by the members of the local Government and by their Moslem neighbours. There is constant fear of another massacre, which is almost certain to occur unless wise measures be instantly adopted. The one desire of the people is to leave the place but any attempt to help them to do so would, if known, be certain to lead to fresh calamity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. W. CHRISTIE.

No. 177.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 103.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 10, 1896.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 424 B of the 29th ultimo, stating that the foreign Representatives at Constantinople had decided to confine themselves for the present, as regards the Zeitoun arrangement, to endeavouring to obtain the appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam, and reporting the representation which you accordingly made to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have to express my approval of the language held by you to Tewfik Pasha on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 178.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 164.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, June 16, 1896.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 433 of the 3rd instant, forwarding copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput relative to the protection of American and Russian subjects in that place, and reporting the instructions which you have sent him in reply.

In the circumstances described by you I approve of Mr. Fontana's taking temporary charge of American interests at Kharput, and I concur in your view that at present there is no need for him to assume a similar responsibility with regard to Russian interests.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 179.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 212.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 17, 1896, 11.30 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Vice-Consul Williams at Van :—

"Disturbances commenced here yesterday. Numerous Armenians and some soldiers killed or wounded. House of chaplain pillaged and burnt. Proper precautions taken for the protection of Europeans, who are safe. I hope that all is now over, although there is still fear of Kurds.

"Inform M. Cambon."

I am making representations to the Porte respecting the above.

No. 180.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 166.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, June 17, 1896.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 456 of the 10th instant, reporting the representations made by you to the Sultan's First Secretary and the Grand Vizier on receiving information from Mr. Fitzmaurice that the Commission of Inquiry had left Birejik, and that no instructions with regard to its proceedings had reached the Vali.

I approve your action in the matter. The utmost vigilance should be exercised to prevent, as far as possible, any departure from the pledges given by the Sultan in regard to the forced conversions of Armenian Christians to Mahommedanism.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 181.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 461.)
My Lord,

Therapia, June 15, 1896.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 201 of the 10th instant, a further joint representation in regard to the appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam at Zeitoun was made on the 10th instant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by the Dragomans of the six Embassies.

They stated that the Porte had broken its solemn promise, that the Ambassadors would not be a party to this breach of faith, and as their dignity and responsibility towards the Zeitounlis were at stake, they insisted on the nomination of a Christian Kaïmakam.

In reply, Tewfik Pasha repeated his former arguments, and said that he was unable

No. 180*.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 101.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 18, 1896, 6·40 P.M.*

REPORT at once by telegraph for what crime the seven Armenians recently hung in Constantinople were executed; also whether they had a fair trial and their guilt was proved, and, if not, whether you have thought it necessary to make representations to the Porte.

A question will be asked in the House of Commons to-morrow on this subject.

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to promise that a Christian should be named at Zeitoun until the other Christian Kaïmakams were appointed.

This is the fourth collective representation made by the Embassies in regard to this question, the solution of which appears to be more remote than ever. Indeed, there is no hope of our legitimate demands ever being granted unless other steps are resorted to. Nor is there any sign of any intention on the part of the Turkish Government to appoint Christian Kaïmakams in the Armenian provinces in accordance with the reforms promulgated on the 15th October, 1895, exactly eight months ago to-day. Tewfik Pasha's argument above stated can therefore only be regarded as an empty subterfuge.

The French Ambassador informed me yesterday that Colonel Vialar, the French Military Attaché, who has just returned from Zeitoun, reports that the situation there is very serious, that the Zeitounlis are becoming desperate, owing to the manner in which the Turkish authorities have violated their engagements towards them, and that unless a Christian Kaïmakam is shortly appointed, there will, in all probability, be another rising. Colonel Vialar also states that the Turkish contention that such an appointment might lead to another massacre is not borne out by facts. On the contrary, the Zeitounlis, in his opinion, are well able to cope with the 2,000 Turkish troops remaining at Zeitoun, which consist chiefly of raw recruits who can scarcely handle their arms, all the best men having been withdrawn for service in Crete.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 182.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 215.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, 11·15 A.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 101 of the 18th June:—

The two Armenians who were hanged in public on the morning of the 15th instant, had been tried in the Criminal Court, and found guilty of the murder of a police officer in the execution of his duty.

I have not made representations as there seems to have been no doubt as to their guilt.

No. 183.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, 10·40 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL WILLIAMS reports to-day from Van by telegraph, that the city is quiet, but still in a state of panic. He proposes the following scheme for the settlement of affairs, and hopes that the Embassy will support him, as he is the only European Consul there:—

"That the Sultan should allow ten of the chief revolutionists to surrender and be escorted by him, under a sufficient escort, to Russia, their safety being guaranteed by the Powers.

"That the two houses which have held out, will surrender all their arms, but in other cases the Armenians should be allowed to retain their weapons, and that His Majesty should by Iradé pardon all the Armenians concerned in this affair."

Major Williams has seen some of the Chiefs of the revolutionists, and has reason to believe that they will accept these terms in order to save their lives and those of their compatriots who would be killed in the necessary attempt to capture the two houses. He states that it would do much to calm the state of affairs, if money were sent to pay the troops, and if the regular infantry were commended for their behaviour, with special mention of two officers named Hallim Effendi Bimbashi and Emin Effendi Bimbashi Cherkess, and adds that it would be of the utmost service if a high decoration or promotion were bestowed on the Vali.

No. 184.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 218.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, noon.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 217 of the 19th instant, repeating Major Williams' telegram of yesterday.

I was informed yesterday by the Grand Vizier, in reply to my representations, that orders had been sent to prevent a renewal of disorders in the town of Van and the outlying districts, and that every possible precaution was being taken. Major Williams' suggestions are extremely dangerous under present circumstances and I foresee endless objections to them. I accordingly do not propose to make any representations on the lines he proposes unless the Porte requests his intervention, which is most improbable. There would certainly be no inclination on the part of my colleagues to guarantee the safety of the revolutionists, whose presence in Russia would be extremely unwelcome.

I have told Major Williams, pending instructions from your Lordship, to exercise great care, and in no way to commit himself.

No. 185.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 210.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, 12·30 P.M.*

A TELEGRAM has been received from the French Consul at Damascus, dated last night, reporting a fresh rising in the Hauran, and the annihilation of four companies of Turkish soldiers by the Druses.

No. 186.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, 10 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 219.

Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus has telegraphed that the Druses have risen in the Hauran, and that the affair is apparently of a very serious nature. One battalion and a-half of regulars have been cut off by them, and one battalion is being besieged in Suedah, where they have burnt the Government buildings.

It is said that Mahommedans and Arabs are making common cause with the Druses.

Four Jeivek battalions have been ordered from Smyrna, and six battalions from Salonica.

No. 187.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 222.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 19, 1896, midnight.*

THE mediation of a French Delegate and the British Consul at Van has been asked for by the Sultan.

My telegram No. 218 of to-day, is thus modified, and I have sent the following telegram to Major Williams without waiting for your Lordship's instructions, in view of the urgency of the matter:—

"In reply to your telegram of the 18th instant; it would not be practical to escort the chief revolutionists to Russia, where they would be unwelcome. Nor could the Powers guarantee their safety. But you should try to make some other arrangement for dealing with the leaders of the revolutionists. The French Ambassador has received a promise from the Sultan that His Majesty will guarantee the lives and the

safety of all the other Armenians in the town of Van, and the Dominican Father has been designated by M. Cambon, as the French Delegate, to act with you in effecting some settlement of the question.

"You are requested by his Excellency to give the following message to him:

"'I have appointed you my Delegate at the request of the Sultan to arrange, in concert with the British Consul, a settlement between the local authorities and the insurgents.'

"No arrangement should be concluded without instructions from us."

No. 188.

Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 28.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Berlin, June 19, 1896, 1·35 P.M.*

GERMAN Government have sent instructions to their Representative at Constantinople to act in unison with his colleagues when they are unanimous with regard to action to be taken in Crete or at Zeitoun.

News of appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam at Zeitoun has not reached Foreign Secretary here.

No. 189.

Anthopoulos Pasha to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 20.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments à sa Seigneurie le Marquis de Salisbury, et s'empresse de lui faire parvenir ci-joint copie d'une communication télégraphique qu'il vient de recevoir de la Sublime Porte au sujet des troubles qui viennent d'avoir lieu à Van.

Ambassade de Turquie, Londres, le 19 Juin, 1896.

Inclosure in No. 189.

Telegrams received from the Sublime Porte.

Constantinople, le 17 Juin, 1896.

DURANT les troubles qui ont eu lieu dans certaines provinces Asiatiques de l'Empire, le Vilayet de Van avait été, comme votre Excellence ne l'ignore point, absolument indemne de toute espèce de désordres. Or, d'après un télégramme reçu du Vilayet de Van portant la signature du Gouverneur-Général, et des Aides-de-camp Généraux Seaddin et Chemsi Pacha, les agitateurs Arméniens ont tenté le 15 courant de fomenter des désordres criminels dans cette ville.

Afin de masquer le jeu de ses compatriotes l'Evêque Arménien a présenté, il y a cinq jours, aux autorités Impériales de cette ville, un takrir faisant pressentir une attaque probable des Kurdes bien qu'il n'y eût guère de ceux-ci en ville et qu'un bataillon de troupes Impériales soit toujours de garde au bazar et dans les différents quartiers de la ville.

Avant-hier, à la suite de soupçons positifs, une jeune fille Arménienne qui portait sur elle des écrits séditieux, avait été arrêtée et, accompagnée de sa mère, logée dans un local spécial par les soins de l'autorité. Un prêtre fut même délégué près d'elle pour leur tenir compagnie.

Prenant prétexte de ce fait et voulant mettre en exécution leur criminel projet préparé de longue main, plusieurs agitateurs surprirent la nuit un peloton de soldats en tournée dans les jardins de la ville et ont blessé grièvement un officier et un soldat. De même, les boutiquiers Arméniens qui se rendaient en ville des jardins où ils habitaient restèrent ce jour-là chez eux d'un commun accord et barricadant leurs maisons tirèrent de nombreux coups de feu de leurs fenêtres sur les Musulmans et soldats de l'armée Impériale traversant les rues.

Cette attaque inqualifiable ayant porté au comble la surexcitation des esprits, une bagarre s'ensuivit et le nombre des morts et des blessés de part et d'autre ne dépasse pas cinquante.

Les armes tombées des mains des agitateurs sont des fusils perfectionnés à cinq coups, de provenance étrangère, et qui ont été claudestinement introduites par la voie de la Perse.

Les mesures d'ordre les plus sévères ont été prises immédiatement afin d'empêcher le renouvellement de ces désordres et l'apaisement des esprits.

Le 18 Juin, 1896.

Les Arméniens de Van continuent leurs agressions contre les Musulmans.

Barricadés dans leurs maisons avec leurs coreligionnaires venus de leur village ils ont tiré sur les Musulmans et tué un nombre très considérable.

Les autorités impériales ont pris toutes les mesures nécessaires pour empêcher les habitants des localités avoisinantes de pénétrer dans la ville.

No. 190.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 20.)

(No. 223.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 20, 1896, 12·50 P.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van has telegraphed as follows:—

"The position of affairs has become most critical; the Kurds have surrounded the town, and an order from the Sultan and the Ambassadors is awaited by us, assuring those Armenians who give themselves up to the Consuls pardon and security. A general amnesty should be proclaimed. Every moment is important."

No. 191.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 20.)

(No. 224.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 20, 1896, 12·50 P.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir has telegraphed as follows:—

"Arms and powder continue to be distributed to the Kurds by certain Turks in the town, who continue to talk of massacres.

"The Vali is instigating this, and if he gets the chance he will certainly promote a fresh massacre.

"Cannot anything be done to get him removed?"

No. 192.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 105.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 20, 1896.

I HAVE received your telegrams Nos. 217 and 218 with regard to Major Williams' proposals to prevent renewal of disturbances in the town of Van. I am of opinion that they are impracticable as they stand, and approve the instructions which you have sent him.

No. 193.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 106.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 20, 1896.

I APPROVE of the telegram which you sent to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van with reference to the arrangements for a settlement between the insurgents and the local authorities, as reported in your telegram No. 222 of to-day.

No. 194.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 21.)

(No. 225.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 21, 1896, 12·30 A.M.

THE Persian Consul, and the Russian Consul, who has returned to Van, will act with the French Delegate and Major Williams.

I have sent the following telegram to Major Williams, after communication with Palace:—

"You should concert with the Russian and Persian Consuls, as well as with the French Delegate.

"The following arrangement which His Majesty states is based on telegrams from local authorities, after communication with you, is proposed by the Sultan:—

"No. 1. That the foreign revolutionists shall be delivered over to their various Consulates, and be sent out of the Ottoman dominions.

"No. 2. That the remaining revolutionist leaders shall be delivered to the local authorities, and their number fixed by the Consuls.

"No. 3. That an amnesty shall be granted to the other Armenians, though legal action may afterwards be taken against them personally.

"No. 4. That all arms and ammunition shall be delivered to the Turkish authorities.

"To No. 1 I agree; as to No. 2, I learn from the Palace that you are proposing to deliver up to the Turkish authorities some forty rebels. If this is so, are you ready to take responsibility of distinguishing between the innocent and the guilty?

"No. 4. When arms and ammunition are given up, are you sure that the Turkish authorities can, and will, prevent the Kurds or the Turkish troops from making reprisals? I am led by past experience to believe that the Armenians will be made to pay later on for this outbreak by the Turkish authorities.

"You cannot, under these circumstances, be too careful in making any suggestions."

No. 195.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 21.)

(No. 226.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 21, 1896, 1·45 A.M.

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship of to-day No. 225, I have sent a further telegram to the Vice-Consul at Van as follows:—

"Tewfik Pasha has now proposed to my Russian and French colleagues and myself, that the local revolutionary leaders shall be tried by court-martial, when they have been given up by the Consuls. This proposal was declined, and I suggested their banishment from the Ottoman dominions. Please use similar language in order to gain this point. Four battalions of infantry and some cavalry are being sent to Van. What troops are there now?"

No. 196.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 21.)

(No. 228.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 21, 1896, 8·15 P.M.

MY telegram No. 224.

Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir has telegraphed as follows:—

"My telegram of 20th June.

"This town and the district depend entirely for security on Zia Pasha, who is in rather precarious health. Very few of the officers or officials are reliable, and the Vali works against him. I have little doubt that there would be another general massacre if anything were to happen to Zia Pasha. In order to put an end to the present state of panic, the removal of the Vali is absolutely necessary."

M. Cambon and I will, to-morrow, once more ask the Sublime Porte for the removal of the Vali.

No. 197.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 113. Secret.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 14, 1896.*

I HAD some conversation at Moscow with the Turkish Extraordinary Ambassador, Zia Pasha, which it may be worth while to report briefly.

In reply to my tentative efforts to find out the train of reasoning that induced the Sultan so seriously to mistrust the action of Her Majesty's Government in regard to Armenia, and to indulge in the dangerous policy of leaning towards Russia, his Excellency, speaking very confidentially, said that no doubt the Sultan's mind had been poisoned, and that "à force de répétition" he had come to believe that the Armenian agitation was started and supported in England with a view to the establishment of the autonomy, and probably the independence of that country. It was difficult to uproot an idea which had once entered His Majesty's head. But in addition to this he thought that the national *amour-propre* had been wounded, and that this had also contributed to the attitude taken up by the Sublime Porte. His Excellency went on to say, in the language familiar to those acquainted with the East, that if the Sultan had been approached in a different manner, more might have been obtained, but at the same time he did not dispute how ineffectual the policy of more moral pressure had been for years past. Nevertheless, he maintained that the Sultan was alive to the mutual interests of Great Britain and Turkey, and that His Majesty would ere long again show full confidence in the advice of Her Majesty's Government. He ventured to hope that late events had not alienated the sympathy of the English people, but he was aware of the danger which I described, and it must be brought home to His Majesty. He could, however, assure me that there was no truth in the reported secret Treaty between Russia and Turkey. The policy of Turkey, according to Zia Pasha, was to avoid alliances of all sorts, and in this connection he told me rather a curious story. He said that after the Franco-German war he was Secretary in Vienna, and M. Andrássy proposed an alliance with Turkey by which Austria should get Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkey recover the Caucasus. The overtures were referred to Constantinople, and the Turkish Ambassador was told to inquire whether they were supported by the Chancellor of the Empire. Count Beust, who was spoken to on the subject, said he was aware of the overtures that had been made, and that he entirely concurred in Count Andrássy's proposals. Thereupon the question was again referred to Constantinople, and Aali Pasha who was, I think the Ambassador said, Minister for Foreign Affairs or Grand Vizier, replied that Turkey could not entertain the proposition of the Austrian Government, as her unique policy was to keep aloof from political entanglements.

The whole story was new to me, but I relate it for what it may be worth. I ought, however, to state that Zia Pasha constantly repeated that he was speaking to me very confidentially, not as Turkish Ambassador, but in his individual capacity, and as an old acquaintance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 198.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 462.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 15, 1896.*

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 153 of the 26th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the intended exile of the Druse prisoners of the Hauran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 198.

Consul Eyres to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Damascus, May 29, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 8th February last, I have the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that the Ottoman Government has decided to exile Sheikh Shibli El Atrash and five other members of the Atrash family, together with the two principal Akkals of the Hauran, five of the principal Sheikhs and two others, in all fifteen. Their destination is to be either Rhodes or Tripoli of Barbary.

It is expected that twenty-five persons from Mejdel and other villages, who are now in prison will shortly be released, as negotiations are being carried on with a view to this end.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 199.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 466.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 17, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mush on the subject of the visit of Anton Effendi Pekmesian, the Armenian Catholic Assistant Vali, to Mush, and the recent appointment of nahiés and tax-collectors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 199.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Mush, June 1, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 15th January I have the honour to report that Anton Effendi Pekmesian, the Armenian Catholic Assistant Vali for this vilayet, passed through Mush last week on his way to Bitlis. He appears to be a harmless person of at least 70 years of age, and is not likely to have any influence either way. Owing to want of time—or of courage—he did not return my visit.

While here he was always carefully guarded by some Turkish official, and the French-speaking clerk of the telegraph office "happened to be calling" at the time for which I had announced my visit.

With regard to the new nahiés in the Mush Plain, I learn that the nine new ones are placed under the two old Nahiés of Avram and Avsakbar, the Mudirs of both of which are Mussulmans. The latter alone will have Secretaries and police at their orders, the others only having two watchmen ("bekjis") ununiformed, in each village. In fact, the new arrangement is no change, except that several villages are now grouped under an intermediary official, who has the name of Mudir, between the real Mudir and the Mukhtars.

Several tax-collectors ("tahsildars") have been named, but as their appointment has to be ratified from Constantinople, it is doubtful whether they will be employed during the present year. Their task will be a most difficult one, for, in the present state of poverty, it will be almost impossible for them to collect money unless they resort to the cruel methods adopted by the zaptiehs, while, if they do not produce the taxes rapidly, they will be dismissed.

Six Christians have also been enrolled as police. Two of them will remain in Mush, and one will be sent to each of the Cazas of Melasgird, Boulanik, Varto, and Sasun.

I have grave doubts whether the appointment of these Christian officials will, in the present state of Mussulman feeling, prove anything but an extra source of danger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 200.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 469.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 17, 1896.*

AS your Lordship is aware, Sir Philip Currie thought it advisable, in view of Shakir Pasha's tour of inspection in the Anatolian provinces, to arrange that he should be met at the frontier of each vilayet by the British Vice-Consul, who should remain with him during his stay.

In consequence of this arrangement, Major Bulman, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, met Shakir Pasha at Erzinjian, and remained with him a few days, but returned to Sivas in the belief that Shakir intended to go direct to Erzeroum. On learning that the Marshal had changed his plans, and set out on a tour of inspection for Cara-Hissar, Major Bulman told the Vali that he proposed to join him, but was informed by his Excellency that his departure would be falsely interpreted by the Armenians, and might prejudice public tranquillity in those districts.

In obedience to an Imperial Iradé the above facts were brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Embassy by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who requested that Major Bulman might be instructed to refrain from proceeding to Cara-Hissar.

Mr. Block reminded Tewfik Pasha, in reply, that Sir Philip Currie had, before leaving, expressed the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at Shakir Pasha's intended tour of inspection, and had informed him that, with a view of supplying the Marshal with information respecting local requirements, Her Majesty's Vice-Consuls had been instructed to accompany him in their respective vilayets. His Excellency had readily consented to this arrangement, and, as there was no Vice-Consul in the Vilayet of Erzeroum, Major Bulman, of Sivas, had been directed to accompany the Marshal when in that vilayet. Mr. Block begged that the Sivas authorities should be instructed not to hinder Major Bulman's movements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 201.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 471.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 17, 1896.*

ON receipt of the numerous despatches from Mr. Graves and Major Williams, copies of which have been forwarded to your Lordship, reporting on the unsatisfactory and alarming state of affairs prevailing in the province of Van, representations have been repeatedly made by my instructions, and previously by those of Sir Philip Currie, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a report sent to the Sublime Porte by Saadeddin Pasha, a member of the Commission of Inspection, which has been communicated to Mr. Block by Tewfik Pasha.

It is needless to comment on the inaccuracy of this document, in view of the reports received from Her Majesty's Consular officers, and especially of Major Williams' telegram of yesterday's date, repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 212, but the official communication of so shameless a denial of the truth serves as a further example of the contempt with which the representations of Her Majesty's Embassy are treated by the Sublime Porte.

I learn privately that Saadeddin Pasha received a sum of 500*l.* as "backsheesh" from the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 201.

Résumé of Telegram addressed from Van, 28th April last (o. s.), to the Sublime Porte by Saadeddin Pasha.

SUR l'avis parvenu aux autorités Impériales de Van que certains méfaits avaient été commis dernièrement dans quelques villages de la province, je me suis rendu sur les lieux avec un bataillon d'infanterie et un détachement de cavalerie, et grâce aux mesures adoptées, une parfaite tranquillité règne actuellement dans ces parages. L'enquête effectuée à propos des prétendues agressions dont les villageois Arméniens auraient été l'objet de la part des Kurdes a établi que les bruits qui avaient été répandus à ce sujet étaient absolument faux. Les Arméniens ne formulent des plaintes contre les Kurdes que pour trouver le prétexte de se rendre à Van afin d'y recevoir des subsides et pour soustraire aux poursuites des autorités Impériales ceux d'entre eux qui s'étaient livrés à des menées subversives.

Parmi les Arméniens qui cherchent à se faire passer comme dépourvus de toute ressource, un grand nombre possèdent les provisions nécessaires pour leur entretien pendant un an. C'est dans le but de donner le change sur leur situation qu'ils avaient fait inscrire leurs bestiaux comme appartenant aux Musulmans.

Les assertions concernant le nombre des objets et bestiaux enlevés pendant les désordres sont également exagérées. Les listes dressées à cet effet le prouvent amplement.

Saadeddin Pacha ajoute que l'état florissant des villages du vilayet habités par les Arméniens démontre qu'ils jouissent d'une parfaite tranquillité.

No. 202.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 229.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 22, 1896, 11 A.M.*

I RECEIVED the following telegram yesterday from Vice-Consul Williams at Van:—

"During the night the rebels left town. If the Nizams, who have behaved very well so far, are to be kept in hand, it is absolutely necessary that they should be paid. Please do your best therefore to insist on the Sultan sending 20,000 liras at once. This represents four months' pay. Tension is over, now that the rebels have fled."

No. 203.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 230.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 22, 1896, 7·30 P.M.*

MR. BULMAN has telegraphed to-day from Sivas, that last Friday there were disturbances at Nicksar, and forty people are reported to have been killed.

No. 204.

Consul Barnham to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 23.)

My Lord, *London, June 21, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a short history of the Zeitoun insurrection (1895–96), and of the Consular mediation which resulted in the restoration of peace.

I beg to inclose a copy of the Report for the use of Her Majesty's Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for Aleppo

Inclosure in No. 204.

Memorandum by Consul Barnham respecting the Zeitoun Insurrection, 1895–96.

THE events of which the town and district of Zeitoun have been the theatre during the past winter can only be properly understood by referring to the history of its people, their hardy and independent character, the inaccessible nature of the country, and especially to the influence brought to bear upon them by agents of the Hunchag Society.

Historical retrospect.

When the invasion of the Caliph of Egypt destroyed the Kingdom of Lesser Armenia, the people fled to the fastnesses of the Taurus Mountains, where they formed the nucleus of an Armenian Colony, under the government of four hereditary Chiefs, and preserved their independence until the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz.

The centre of that Colony was the town of Zeitoun. In 1861, Aziz Pasha, Mutessarif of Marash, marched against Zeitoun at the head of a large army of Bashi-Bazouks, 150 Sheikhs and Mollahs preceding the column. The Zeitounlie, led by their priests, chanting the penitential psalms, met and defeated the invaders at the Bertis River, four hours from the town of Marash. This event caused considerable alarm at Constantinople, and orders were sent to the Government of Marash that Zeitoun should be reduced to submission at any cost. Large forces were sent forward, and the town closely invested, but at this juncture Mgr. Hassoun, Patriarch of the Armenian Catholics, having secured the intervention of the French Government, the Sultan consented to the appointment of a Commission to negotiate terms of submission. The members of this Commission were one Turkish official, the Gregorian and Catholic Bishops of Marash, and the Head of the Protestant Church in that city. Reduced by hunger, the people of Zeitoun surrendered, and for the first time submitted to the yoke of a Turkish Governor, and to the payment of 15,000 piastres annually to the Turkish treasury. The Governors were, as a rule, ill-chosen, and their rapacity notorious. The taxes were gradually raised until 1878, when they were fixed at 500,000 piastres, and the action of the Governor, Daoud Effendi, in enforcing payment, provoked a revolt under a notorious brigand named Babik. A Commission, consisting of Mazhar Pasha and Nourian Effendi, was sent to inquire into the grievances of the people. It was attended unofficially by Lieutenant Chermside, whose reports describe the work of the Commission, after four months' inquiry, as a shameful fiasco. On the recommendation of the British Government Mazhar Pasha was recalled on account of misconduct, and Saïd Pasha sent to Zeitoun as Special Commissioner. He proclaimed a general amnesty, and, by his judicious conciliatory, attitude, succeeded in speedily restoring order.

The last outbreak occurred in 1890, and was provoked by the arbitrary proceedings of Salih Pasha, Governor of Marash, but was suppressed without any serious consequences.

Physical features of district.

The unquestioned independence of Zeitoun during many centuries, at a distance of only 40 miles from Marash, coupled with the many difficulties which the Turkish troops have encountered in suppressing these successive revolts, indicate that nature has placed a mighty barrier between Marash and Zeitoun.

This is the Akhir Dagh Mountain, immediately above the town of Marash. It is most difficult of ascent in severe winter weather, the path being a mere goat's track, following the edge of a precipice up to the summit. Storms are always sudden and terrible, and the loss of life to soldiers or transport animals who lose their way during the passage across has been so great that the Government has now decided to erect a khan on the summit.

I find that this range is marked on a map of the 13th century by the suggestive words "diabolica montana." Four hours from Marash the traveller has crossed the range, and passing a small stream called the Bertis Chai, reaches the River Jehan (the Gihon of Scripture), which he must cross before commencing the ascent to Zeitoun. The river is crossed at the Hamidié Bridge, a wooden structure, erected in 1892 by Salih Pasha, Mutessarif of Marash.

The last part of the road is peculiarly difficult. It is bad for the passage of troops because it is at all points commanded by hills which give every advantage to an armed enemy.

Such are the general features of a country in which, moreover, the people have chosen the most inaccessible retreats for the construction of their villages. Indeed I know no region of Asiatic Turkey, except the Hekkiari Mountains, which is so well adapted for successful resistance to authority.

Description of Zeitoun.

The town of Zeitoun is built on a steep slope of a mountain called the Chirik Dagh, and at the junction of two mountain torrents called the Chavadar Deresi and the Téké Deresi (see map, Appendix I).* The houses are flat-roofed, of sun-dried brick, built one upon the other, and present the appearance of long shelves projecting from the hill-side. There are about 1,200 houses, many of which, in ordinary times, contain two or three families, as married sons commonly live with their parents.

The population before the insurrection was about 7,500. The town is divided into four quarters, known respectively as the Yeni Dunya, Suren Oghlu, Gargalar, and Boz Bayir. In former days each of these formed the independent territory of an Ishan, or feudal Chief. The steep and narrow streets were the scene of constant bloodshed, for these clans were seldom at peace with one another. It was a rare event that a man from Boz Bayir should enter and worship in a church at Yeni-Dunia, and *vice versâ*, and the same want of goodwill and fellowship between the people of the different quarters is still to be observed at the present day.

People of Zeitoun.

The Zeitounlis have no leader with an influence for good, and it is very difficult to unite them for any rational object.

They are ignorant and lazy, and, consequently, poor, and many prefer to rob travellers on the Marash road rather than stay at home and cultivate the vine. A small part of the population earn a living as farriers and implement makers, obtaining the iron for the purpose from the mountain of Beyrût Dagh, seven hours distant; and others are muleteers.

They have the brave and independent character common to mountain races, and, as I have shown above, they have made a good record whenever they have taken up arms against the Turks.

Their ill-treatment by the authorities.

When the Hunchag agents entered into communication with the Zeitounlis they found that the authorities had made their task an easy one, and that the people, goaded by ill-treatment at the hands of the Kaïmakam, were ripe for revolt. The Kaïmakam was removed, but the Cadi who was appointed Acting Governor, and was a notorious fanatic, made the situation intolerable. Arrears of taxes were called for, and many of the people imprisoned and beaten. Their chattels were seized and sold off-hand, and no day passed without some act of violence or insult. The Cadi commonly addressed the Zeitounlis as "dogs" or "giaours," saying that if they did not pay he would have the guns fired on them from the barracks, and they should fare "as others had done in Sasoun." In July last Abdul Wahab Pasha, Mutessarif of Marash, was sent to Zeitoun to hold an inquiry into these proceedings, the Cadi was removed, and a certain Avni Effendi appointed Kaïmakam.

The majority of the people were contented with this arrangement, but the more turbulent ones, headed by Nazaret Chaoush Yenidunig and his clan, had already pledged themselves to the Hunchags, and only waited for a signal to commence the rebellion.

Aghassé, the Hunchag leader.

Early in March 1894 Aghassé, the Hunchag agent, arrived in Marash, where he held a meeting of malcontent Zeitounlis, supplied them with funds, and laid the foundations of an extensive organization in Zeitoun and the surrounding villages. He spent the following year in collecting money for the purchase of arms, and after a protracted stay at Suedia, came in July 1895 to the villages of Ala Bash, where the rebellion eventually broke out.

His companions: Heratchia, Abba, Jellad, and Melli.

With him were associated four Armenians from America, who bore the assumed names of Heratchig, Abba, Jellad, and Melli, who were fighting leaders, as distinguished from Aghassé, the political Chief. The revolt was the deliberate work of this man, who won over the villagers by presents of money, and by telling them fairy tales about the English.

They were made to believe that the movement had the support of the British Government, who were sending troops to Alexandretta, and that Aghassé was in constant communication with the British Consulate in Aleppo.

* Not given.

I inclose herewith a map of the theatre of revolt (Appendix II),* in which the villages and roads are marked; but the mountains have been omitted for the purpose of rendering it more legible, and because it is understood that the entire country is of a mountainous character.

Ala Bash.

Ala Bash is a nahié or commune about 8 miles from Zeitoun, extending some 15 miles in the direction of Marash. It consists of small groups of houses scattered over the hills, inhabited by Armenians who have always borne an indifferent character.

Commencement of revolt on the 16th October.

On the 6th October, Lieutenant Osman Agha, of the gendarmerie, having been sent to Ala Bash for the purpose of collecting taxes, returned to Marash with the news that the people had revolted, and were assembled on the hills under the command of Hatchro, Michel Kevaha, and Der Stepan.

On the 19th October the Alabashlis killed two gendarmes, and, on the same day, Aghassé, with a party of Alabash villagers, crossed the boundaries of the Caza of Andrin, attacked the village of Kumarly, wounded two men and a woman, and carried off a quantity of cattle.

On the 20th October, some Armenians from Marash and Aintab joined the Alabashlis, and raided the villages of Kirech and Deongel, in the Caza of Geoksun.

On the 22nd October, towards sunset, a young man named Guemleksiz Mehemet, of Marash, was attacked while returning home and badly wounded. He died on the following day. Several Armenians were arrested in consequence; arms were found in the houses of some among them, while others were tortured in prison for the purpose of making them confess their guilt.

On the 23rd October the Alabashlis attacked a caravan proceeding from Kaiserieh to Marash.

On the 24th October occurred the first outbreak at Marash.

On the 25th October, the Kaïmakam of Zeitoun sent Der Garabed, the chief ecclesiastic in the town, to the rebels, to communicate a telegram from the Armenian Patriarch, announcing that the Sultan had granted the reforms, and ordering them to return to their homes.

Aghassé gave an evasive answer, asking for a delay of twelve days for reflection; but on hearing from Aleppo that the official telegram from the Porte on the subject of the reforms was of a nature to throw doubt on the sincerity of the Sultan, he decided to continue hostilities.

On the 26th October, Mehemet Effendi, Bimbashi, together with three gendarmes, were attacked and killed by the Armenians of Fernoz, near the Turkoman village of Omarlu.

Battle near the Bertis River.

On the 26th October a company of soldiers was sent from Marash against the insurgents, and encamped the same evening near a mill at Tchaker Deresi, on the Bertis River.

At daybreak on the 27th they were attacked by the men of Ala Bash and Fernouz, together with a party of Zeitounlis, under Aghassé, Jellad, and Nazaret Chanoush. An obstinate fight took place, in which the Turks were only saved from defeat by the Moslem villagers of Bertis, who came up nearly one thousand strong, armed with flintlocks, pitchforks, or the first weapon which came to hand, and forced the insurgents to retreat, with the loss of their leader Jellad.

Intention of Zeitounlis to attack Marash

These men did excellent service, for, had the Armenians won the day, they had intended to march upon Marash where there was a small garrison, and where they counted upon the help of their co-religionists.

It was, however, a foolish project, certain to end in ultimate disaster; for even if it were possible that a handful of rebels, who were, as yet, unarmed with European rifles, could seize this town where Moslems are to Christians as three to one, there is no doubt that they would only hold it for a few days, and then the fate of the local Armenian population would have been a terrible one.

The fight at the Bertis River took place on the site of that referred to at the commencement of this Report, when, in 1861, the Zeitounlis defeated a large force of Circassians under Aziz Pasha.

* Not given.

Attack on barracks.

The insurgents now returned to Zeitoun with the object of attacking the barracks, and, as a preliminary step, cut the telegraph wire connecting Zeitoun with Albistan.

Turkish garrison at Zeitoun.

There were at this time 469 soldiers in the barracks, 20 of whom were Bashi-Bozouks just arrived from Marash, and 100 of them had not been supplied with rifles. They were all young soldiers, and were drawn from towns in Northern Palestine. Many of them had their wives living in the barracks. Besides these there were about eighty men stationed at the Government House in Zeitoun.

The battalion was commanded by Colonel Iffet Bey, an officer who had served in the Russian war, and his staff consisted of a Bimbashi, then absent on sick-leave, a Captain, and two Lieutenants.

Attack on barracks.

On the morning of the 28th October 300 men from the Yeni-Dunya quarter besieged the barracks on the north-east side, thereby cutting off the Turks from their water supply, which was obtained from a spring on the hill-side, 200 yards below the barracks. Others then commenced an attack from the north and south, coming within a few yards of the building, and an obstinate fight was carried on throughout the day.

At sunset on the 28th October the insurgents seized and burnt all the outlying buildings except the mosque and telegraph office, which were taken the following day. There were about 5,000 insurgents on the ground, armed with flint-locks, revolvers, and a few rifles, while the besieged had two mountain guns and 370 Martinis. Fighting continued day and night both before the barracks and before the Government House in Zeitoun.

Surrender of Kaïmakam.

The Kaïmakam, with his small garrison of eighty men, surrendered on the evening of the 29th, and at once wrote to the Colonel advising him to follow his example, as in case of further resistance the insurgents intended to burn the barracks.

Surrender of barracks.

The garrison surrendered on the morning of the 30th October, 2 mountain guns, 370 Martini-Henry's, and 90,000 rounds of ammunition passing into the hands of the insurgents.

Commandant to be tried by court-martial.

Iffet Bey, who awaits his trial at Aleppo for treason and cowardice, pleads in justification that the garrison had no water, and therefore no means of making bread, but the authorities say that he ought to have died with his men rather than surrender; that he was intoxicated while the fighting was going on; and that he had weakly allowed himself to be overcome by the wailing and entreaties of the women.

In consequence of this, it has been decided that in future no Turkish official or soldier may bring his wife to Zeitoun.

Hamidié Bridge occupied by Turkish troops.

The telegraph wire from Zeitoun to Albistan having been cut, the news of the capture of the barracks did not reach Marash until the afternoon of the 31st October.

In the meantime, two battalions, one from Marash, the other from Albistan, had been dispatched to the relief of the garrison, but on arriving at the Hamidié Bridge they learned that the barracks had been taken, and remained there, on the defensive, thereby preventing the Zeitounlis from making a second attempt to surprise Marash.

Murder of Lieutenant Hassan Agha and family.

On the 30th October, Lieutenant Hassan Agha, with his family, was proceeding from Fekké to Marash when he was attacked by the people of Fernouz, who first killed his three children, then violated his wife, and finally killed them both.

Mobilisation of a Division of Reserves.

The Government was now thoroughly alarmed, and the Reserves were called out, it being decided to mobilize a complete division for the campaign against Zeitoun.

Mustafa Remzy Pasha.

The command of the expedition was given to Mustafa Remzy Pasha, Ferik of St. Jean d'Acre, who arrived at Marash on the 2nd November. The first brigade was intrusted to Selim Pasha, an old officer, who had done considerable service in the Yemen, and the second brigade to Colonel Ali Bey, of Adana.

Selim Pasha

Ali Bey.

The whole of November and part of December was idled away by Mustafa Pasha in Marash waiting until this mobilization was complete, and in the meantime the revolt was spreading. The second brigade also lay at the village of Keban for nearly a month waiting for reinforcements.

Events at Zeitoun after capture of barracks.

I now resume the thread of events which succeeded the capture of the barracks.

During the first three days of November the soldiers' wives and civil officials were liberated and forwarded to Marash, but the Colonel, with his officers, the Governor, and the soldiers were retained as hostages.

On the 3rd November a small massacre occurred at Marash, being the second of three which took place within the short space of three weeks. These massacres have formed the subject of earlier Reports, and are only referred to here to record the sequence of all events connected with the rebellion.

Villagers of Fernouz attack Moslem village of Chukur Hissar.

On the 4th November the people of Fernouz, having heard that the Moslems of Chukur Hissar had attacked a small Armenian village of the same name, came down upon them, killed eighty, wounded sixteen, and carried off all the grain and live stock. It is stated by the authorities that they mutilated the women in a manner too horrible for description.

Zeitounlis raid villages near Yenijé-Kaleh.

The same day the Zeitounlis sacked and partially burned the following villages in the Caza of Yenijé Kaleh: Suskoordi, Koshoorké, Mosalli, and Kariss, together with Karemli, in the Caza of Andrin.

Yaiji Oghlou attacks Shivilki.

On the 4th November, Yaiji Oghlou Durmish Agha, of the Turkoman family of Zulkader (the most powerful Mussulman in Andrin), attacked Shivilki with a large number of Bashi-Bazouks. The villagers resisted during several days, until they were joined by those from Tavutlu, when the Bashi-Bazouks returned to Andrin. The village was again attacked shortly afterwards, when the survivors fled to Fernouz

Villagers take refuge at Fernouz.

Mudir of Geoksun attacks Armenian villages.

On the 5th November, 600 Turks and Circassians from Geoksun, commanded by the Mudir, Fevzi Bey, attacked the villages of Tash-Olook, Deghirmen Deré, Kirech, Guel Ponnar, and Jamoos Oycok, as a reprisal for the alleged murder of some Turks who had passed through those villages a few days before. About 200 Christians were killed, and the remainder (probably about 1,200) fled to Fernouz and Zeitoun, and joined the insurgents.

Circassians attack Tekir.

The same day the Circassians attacked the village of Tekir, and the Turks from Nadirli, with a large number of Bashi-Bazouks under Osman Kehaya, attacked the villages of Telemelik and Boghourlou. The fighting in these villages continued off and on for sixteen days, until the Zeitounlis came upon the scene and the Bashi-Bazouks were driven off.

Turks attack Telemelik and Boghourlou.

Armenians sack Tanur and Deongel, Kebun.

On the 5th November the insurgents sacked the villages of Tanur and Deongel.

On the 6th November, the inhabitants of the Armenian village of Kebun attacked those of the Moslem village of the same name, disarmed them, and carried off their flocks.

Bishan.

On the 13th November, the Zeitounlis under Nazaret Chaoush burned the village of Bishan, and on the same day the Alabashlis burned Kortel.

Kortel.

The revolt had now developed into a racial war, one village attacking the other, until, when destruction had been carried to its utmost limits, the survivors fled—Moslems to Murnsh, Armenians to Fernouz first, and afterwards to Zeitoun.

On the 14th November, the insurgents, led by Bartholomeos, priest of Fernouz, and Nischan Yenidunin, met the Bashi-Bazouks of Yaiji Oghlou at Azgud Kalesi, defeated them, and pushing on to Andrin, burnt that place. The news of this event caused great commotion among the Mussulman population in Marash, many of whom had their families at Andrin, and suffered loss of friends or property.

Azgud Kalesi, Andrin burnt by Armenians

Kebun.

On the 14th November, the Armenians of Kebun, led by a band of Zeitounlis under Abbi, the Hunchag, burnt the Moslem village of the same name, killing sixty of the inhabitants. In consequence of this Ali Bey burnt the Armenian village two days later, and the refugees, more than 1,000 in number, fled to Fernouz.

On the 18th November the final massacre occurred at Marash.

On the 19th November, in consequence of the insurgents, led by Heratchia, the Hunchag, having raided the Moslem villagers at Yenijé Kalé, two battalions were sent there from Marash. They sacked and partially burned the villages of Yenijé Kalé, Deongel, and Mujuk Deresi, burned the Franciscan monasteries at those places, and assassinated Padre Salvatore, the Superior of the monastery at Mujuk Deresi, together with several of his flock, burning their bodies with petroleum while they were yet breathing. They then proceeded to the monastery of Yenije Kalé with the same object, but the Spanish priests, Emanuel Garcia, Emanuel Ituri, and Martinos, had received timely warning and escaped into Fernouz with about 500 villagers. Their retreat was covered by a party of insurgents under Heratchia, who arrived on the scene just in time.

Troops murder Padre Salvatore at Mujuk Deresi.

Spanish priests escape from Yenijé-Kaleh

Meanwhile, Ali Bey removed his head-quarters from Keban to Sisué, and remained there inactive until the 8th December, waiting for the departure of the 1st brigade from Marash, when both forces would advance upon Zeitoun simultaneously.

Troops under Ali Bey attack Fernouz.

But, in the meantime, the position of the insurgents at Fernouz had become a serious obstacle to his advance, and he accordingly attacked that place on the 14th December, having with him four battalions and two guns. A large number of Bashi-Bazouks followed in his wake.

Fernouz.

Fernouz is the centre of an Armenian nahié, comprising the villages of Kara-tût, Dadurlu, Boghourlu, and Temerlelek. It lies in a hollow, shut in by wooded mountains, and traversed by a wild torrent. The monastery of Fernouz was on the hill-side, about a mile from the village, and scattered about on the mountains are some caves, very difficult of access, which have become the refuge of many fugitives since Fernouz was burnt.

When the insurgents heard that the troops were advancing, they went out to meet them with the object of protecting the Christian village of Chukur-Hissar, which lay on the line of march, but when they were at some distance from that village, they saw that it was already in flames, so retreated towards Fernouz, keeping up a running fire with the enemy from the opposite hills.

Burning of Fernouz. Loss of life.

The village was speedily surrounded and bombarded, though with little effect, until the second day, when it caught fire. About 800 Armenians perished, but the women and children were spared, and forwarded to Murash on the following day, where many of them were relieved by the American missionaries. The monastery of Fernouz was also burnt. The refugees who fled from Fernouz into Zeitoun were above 5,000, but the total number of these unhappy people who were in Zeitoun when Mustafa Remzi Pasha arrived before the town, was nearly 14,000.

Mustafa Remzy Pasha advances against Zeitoun.

While the troops of Ali Bey were attacking Fernouz, the noise of artillery was heard in the direction of Zeitoun, showing that Mustafa Pasha was already advancing upon the town.

The refugees in Zeitoun murder th Turkish prisoners.

The fall of Fernouz provoked a terrible incident at Zeitoun—the massacre of the Turkish soldiers imprisoned in Government House. While the men of Zeitoun were away on the hills resisting the advance of Mustapha Remzi Pasha, the refugees from Fernouz began to pour into the town, and roused the angry passions of the people by the story of their sufferings. Towards sundown an excited mob, among whom were many women, collected outside Government House, for word had been passed along that they should avenge themselves by killing the prisoners. They had armed themselves with hatchets, butchers' knives, and pickaxes, and now, with loud yells and imprecations, forced their way upstairs to the room where these hapless young fellows were confined. Padre Emanuel, a Catholic priest, who witnessed the tragedy from the roof of his house, told me that it took two hours' hard work to dispose of them, and that their shrieks were appalling.

Fifty-seven of the prisoners saved by Avidis Shamlian

That night a Protestant, named Avidis Shamlian, filled with a noble desire to save life, took a lantern and made his way through the deserted streets to the scene of the massacre. Finding that some were still alive, he called a friend, and, together, they proceeded to search out the living, of whom they succeeded in saving fifty-seven. One by one they carried them off on their backs, and taking them to their own homes, nursed and fed them until the day of the capitulation, when they were brought into the Turkish camp, and then forwarded to the hospital at Marash.

On that occasion I saw one man who had received no less than seventeen wounds.

The dead thrown into the Zeitoun River.

During several days after the massacre no attempt was made to remove the dead; but when the troops arrived before the town it was thought advisable to do so, and the bodies were therefore thrown over the Gargalar Bridge into the Zeitoun River, no doubt with the hope that the torrent would sweep them quickly out of sight; but when I went down to the river six weeks after the event, I found them standing high and dry upon the rocks or imbedded in masses of ice and snow, and when I examined them, I found some with their heads split open by the axe, others with their legs chopped off, or covered with stabs on every conceivable part of the body. In some cases they were fastened together in couples at the wrist or ankles.

350 Turkish prisoners killed.

The total number of prisoners killed was about 350.

Avidis Shamlian is deserving of some substantial reward for saving the lives of the fifty-seven prisoners; but the Government has, as yet, taken no notice of him. It was not only that he saved these lives, but it brought upon him terrible persecution at the hands of the Hunchags. He incurred the enmity of Aghassé, because he constantly reproached him with having deceived the people and caused their present suffering. One day he was seized at the convent and placed in a vault together with a Turkish prisoner to whom he was chained, the two men being left without food until they were released on the third day through the intervention of the priests.

Tyranny practised by Hunchag leader

I now pass on to describe the fighting which took place outside Zeitoun, and the establishment of the blockade.

Fighting outside Zeitoun.

On the 14th December Mustapha Remzy Pasha, with 7,000 men, left the Hamidié Bridge, and, after three hours' march, found the insurgents collected on the heights above the Convent of Sourp Purgitch, to the right of the caravan road.

With considerable difficulty and some loss he succeeded in driving them off, burnt the convent, and encamped.

Convent burnt.

Next morning a series of skirmishes commenced, during which the soldiers burnt some villages in the neighbourhood of the convent. Eventually, after two days' fighting, the insurgents were driven from hill to hill, until they were finally routed at Eshex Meidani (two hours from Zeitoun), and fled to the barracks.

Insurgents routed at Eshek Meidani.

They always fought with great bravery, and their rifle-shooting from behind hastily provided stockades was admitted by the Turks to be excellent.

Bravery of Zeitounlis.

Ali Bey arrived from Fernouz on the 19th December, and his advanced guard had come to within ten minutes' march of the Gargala Bridge when the insurgents attacked them from the Solak Dagh Mountain, and drove them back to the village of Muhall.

Ali Bey before Zeitoun.

On the 18th December, Mustapha Remzi Pasha began to bombard the barracks from three points on the Pussur Dagh, and this continued at intervals during four days.

Bombardment of barracks.

From the 21st to the 23rd the troops of Ali Bey were engaged with about 1,000 insurgents on Solak Dagh, and were at the same time under fire from the two guns at the barracks. The artillery fire of the rebels was bad, but their rifle practice was so good that the troops did not care to face it, and kept themselves as much as possible under cover. This, and the small number of rifles in the hands of the Zeitounlis accounts for the few casualties which occurred among the Turkish troops during the fighting.

On the 23rd December there was a thick mist, under cover of which the troops were able to come close up to the barracks, and would perhaps have captured them, had they not at this moment been set on fire to by the Zeitounlis themselves. There were about 200 of the insurgents in the building when this occurred, of whom only 70 escaped. These made their way out by a door on the town-side, which had been made by Aghassé some days earlier in anticipation of their being forced to make a hasty retreat. The Turks were not aware of its existence, so that the insurgents were able, under cover of the mist, to escape unseen, carrying with them one of the guns.

Barracks burnt.

A deputation now came out from Zeitoun under a flag of truce, and asked leave to treat for peace. It was composed of Der Garabet (the priest), Baba Agha, Avidis Shamlian, and two others, all of whom were non-combatants. They were, however, roughly handled, and imprisoned during two days, and their valuables taken from them. When they returned home, they were all men determined to die rather than surrender. I have been assured that if Mustapha Pasha had been less offensive in his language to the people, they would have surrendered at that time, for their resources were fast failing; but now they gave up all hope of safety, and began to raise barricades in the streets, and to manufacture hatchets and knives for self-defence.

Deputation of Zeitounlis sues for peace.

Its treatment by Mustafa Remzy Pasha.

A vigorous bombardment was now commenced upon town and convent, but with singularly little effect. From the commencement of the siege up to the date of the armistice no less than 2,500 cannon shots were fired upon the insurgents; but the shells rarely exploded, and the Zeitounlis, whose ammunition was failing, profited by the fact in extracting the powder and lead to renew their Martini-Henry cartridges. Then, anticipating that the Turks would storm the town, it was agreed that the townspeople should reserve their

Bombardment renewed

Zeitounlis in extremity extract powder and lead from unexploded shells to renew their cartridges.

ammunition until the last day, and that, in the meantime, only the men in the convent (who were the best marksmen), should return the fire of the troops.

If the town had been assaulted there would have been a terrible hand-to-hand fight in the streets, and heavy loss on both sides, ending, however, in victory to the Turks, and a wholesale slaughter of the helpless refugees. The only practical way of storming Zeitoun would have been to take the troops across the Chavadar ravine and enter the town from above, as all approaches from below are too steep and easily guarded. The Turks were, however, alive to the difficulty of the task, and it was their intention to set fire to the town and compel the people to come out into the open, when, with their ammunition spent, they would have been an easy mark for the Turkish bullets.

Difficulty of taking Zeitoun by assault.

Zeitoun was, however, spared the final catastrophe.

On the 3rd January Edhem Pasha arrived in camp to take over the command from Mustapha Remzi Pasha, who returned in disgrace to St. Jean d'Acre. Edhem Pasha is an officer who has taken an active and distinguished part in every war which Turkey has fought during the present reign, and it required such a man to bring a remedy to the disorder which existed in the camp. He found the troops fed on half rations of biscuit. Hundreds of them without uniform; the greater number of them being in rags and barefooted. The supply of tents was insufficient to shelter them without excessive crowding, and constant rain had turned the camp into a swamp. Therefore, it was not surprising that a large number of the younger soldiers were down with dysentery, but as there was no hospital and no medicine, they were sent down to Marash for treatment, and a large percentage of them died there.

Edhem Pasha.

Condition of troops.

A month later all this misery was relieved, and there was not a man in camp who was not well fed and warmly clothed. Edhem Pasha had caused an appeal to be made to public charity, with the result that abundant supplies of clothing of every description came in from Anatolia, especially from the districts from which the Reserves were drawn. The Commissariat stores were now full of provisions, and by the end of February dysentery had ceased to exist.

The force before Zeitoun was 16,000 men. When they were first called out they were a helpless rabble, but the campaign against Zeitoun was a severe school for them, and those who have survived it should now, if properly commanded, be smart and useful soldiers, but their officers are for the most part incapable.

16,000 men before Zeitoun.

There were, however, other enemies before Zeitoun at the opening of the new year. A glance at the accompanying map* will show that there is a large Circassian Colony to the north of Zeitoun, the names of the villages being marked by asterisks. These villages of Tchetchen Circassians have only come into existence quite recently, and I think it probable that the Government encouraged these people to settle there in order to keep the Zeitounlis in check. Many of them, whose villages had been threatened, or perhaps raided by the Armenians, had been armed by Mustapha Remzi Pasha with Martini rifles,† and when the news spread that the insurgents had been driven to bay, and that the capture of the town was imminent, these and others from the Great Circassian settlement at Mumbudj, near the Euphrates, and from the plain of the Amook, hurried to Zeitoun to claim their share of the spoil.

15,000 Circassians before Zeitoun.

When Edhem Pasha arrived at Zeitoun, there were at least 15,000 Bashi-Bazouks hovering outside the camp, eagerly demanding leave to attack the town. The Pasha summoned their leaders, and ordered them to leave at once, but as they showed themselves determined to remain, it was necessary to make a display of force to induce them to go.

The troops were called out, and they were driven off; but the news which arrived the same day that a Consular Commission was coming to arrange terms of peace, had, no doubt, some effect in inducing them to return quietly to their homes.

Circassians leave.

Mediation.

On the 17th November I received a letter from Der Garabed, the priest, in which it was stated that the refugees were already crowding into Zeitoun, and that provisions were running short, and it concluded with a passionate appeal for

Proposal as to mediation.

* Not printed.

† They were taken from them by Edhem Pasha.

help. About the same time, Dr. Shepard, of Aintab College, wrote to beg me to move in the matter, and feeling considerable anxiety about it, I addressed myself, in the first instance, to the Ferik, Edhem Pasha, who cordially approved my suggestion that a Commission should be sent to Zeitoun to induce the insurgents to lay down their arms.

Advantage of sending a Commission from Aleppo.

I had in view five or six residents of Aleppo who were admirably fitted for such a duty. I thought that delegates from Aleppo where no massacres had taken place, would be more likely to discuss the question with the insurgents in a practical manner, than if they were chosen, for instance, from Marash, where massacres had already occurred.

On the 19th November I telegraphed to Her Majesty's Embassy suggesting that such a Commission should be sent, but the Porte, while acceding to the proposal, decided that the Delegates should be selected at Marash.

Commission sent from Marash.

Five Armenians were accordingly chosen, but without any regard to their fitness for the task, and were sent to Zeitoun with verbal instructions to promise a general amnesty, on condition that the leaders should be handed over for trial, and the town, barracks, and Turkish prisoners surrendered.

Members of Commission imprisoned as spies.

On arrival at Zeitoun these men, Gostan Effendi, Osep Effendi, Bedros Salatian, Pappas Torossian, and Artin Muradian, were imprisoned as spies, and remained in confinement until the troops appeared before the town, when they were set at liberty, but only to be again thrown into prison at Marash.

The only effect of their mission was to make the Zeitounlis more irreconcilable than ever, owing to the exaggerated accounts they gave of the massacres at Marash.

Mutessarif of Marash tries to negotiate.

On the 25th December the Mutessarif of Marash, with three members of his Council of Administration, came to Zeitoun to open negotiations, but they were immediately rejected, probably owing to the distrust with which the people had been inspired by the language of Mustapha Remzi Pasha.

Six Great Powers offers services of their Consuls.

The Six Great Powers now offered the Porte the services of their Consuls at Aleppo as mediators between the Ottoman Government and the insurgents.

Naturally such a mission, especially if attended with success, was regarded as humiliating to Moslem pride, and it was after considerable hesitation that the Porte consented.

Edhem Pasha and the Mutessarif of Marash represented the Imperial Government during the negotiations.

Mediation accepted by Porte.

And by Zeitounlis.

On the 5th January the six Consuls having received the instructions of their Ambassadors, sent a collective telegram to the insurgents offering mediation, and, on the following day, received a reply of thanks and acceptance, signed by thirteen of the leading inhabitants, but not by the Hunchag leaders, and those who constituted the fighting minority. The latter, who had absolute control over the town up to the date of our arrival, had been playing for European intervention from the outset. The imprisonment of the Armenian delegates from Marash, and the subsequent refusal to treat with the Mutessarif, were sensational proceedings, intended to attract the attention of the Powers, but when the Consular delegates approached them they held aloof, with the idea of exaggerating their influence, and increasing their demands, and this at a time when they knew that all their resources were at an end.

The fighting minority.

Armistice proclaimed.

For the purpose of mediation an armistice was proclaimed at Zeitoun on the 7th January.

The Consuls who proceeded to Zeitoun were M. Yakimanski, (Russian), M. Vitto (Italian), representing also Germany and Austria), M. Barthélemy (French Chancellier), and myself.

Delay was occasioned by a proposal put forward by my Russian and French colleagues that the leaders of the insurgents should be invited to come to Aleppo for the negotiation. I think such a proposal should not have borne a moment's consideration, in view of the impossibility of guaranteeing the safety of these men through the midst of their enemies, but it was submitted in all seriousness for the consideration of their Ambassadors, and was not approved.

Mission leaves Aleppo the 16th January

The Mission left Aleppo on the 16th January, with an escort of eighty cavalry, and with a clerk from the Telegraph Office in Aleppo, whose duty it was to forward telegrams in French passing between the Embassies and the Consuls at Zeitoun.

Mission arrives at Zeitoun

The journey was made during terrible weather, and it was not before the last day of January that we had all reached the Turkish camp. I think, however, that we had every reason to appreciate the assistance which we received from the authorities.

Zeitoun closely invested.

One glance at the town was sufficient to convince any one of the hopeless situation of the insurgents, for the cordon extended around and above Zeitoun at a distance of 600 yards, or even less, while escape in the direction of Geoksun, or Albistan, was cut off by pickets of soldiers on the other side of the mountain.

The position occupied by the troops have been marked on the map.

On the 1st February we summoned the Zeitounlis, and communicated to them the Turkish conditions of surrender, viz., a general amnesty subject to the—

Turkish terms of capitulation.

(*a.*) Surrender of the leaders of the revolt, who should be tried by the ordinary Courts of Law.

(*b.*) Restitution of the Martini rifles, taken at the capture of the barracks.

(*c.*) Reconstruction of the barracks.

Negotiations.

We told them that we had no other message, but were simple intermediatories, who had come to them in the name of humanity, hoping to prevent further bloodshed.

Bartholomeos, priest of Fernouz, first addressed the meeting, and declared that as all their villages had been destroyed and they had no hope of safety in the future, they had better die fighting.

Then Garabed, priest of Zeitoun, followed, but in a more rational strain, and others, all of whom showed a disposition to accept the terms, but begged that, as many of their leaders had been unable to come through illness, the meeting should be adjourned.

Aghassé, the Hunchag leader, then informed us that there were 30,000 refugees in the town, and expressed a hope that every effort would be made to save them.

It was, however, an exaggerated statement, made with the object of stimulating our anxiety to save the town, or, in the event of its being attacked, to expose the Turkish Commander to the reproach of having perpetrated a terrible massacre.

The number of refugees then in Zeitoun was really about 12,000.

At a second meeting held on the 3rd February, the insurgents replied :—

Reply of insurgents.

1. That as they had taken up arms in self-defence [*sic*], they trusted that their leaders would be included in the general amnesty.

2. They would surrender the Martini rifles if allowed to retain their sporting guns, daggers, and pistols.

3. They pleaded their inability to rebuild the barracks.

4. They asked that their Moslem neighbours should be disarmed, and begged the Powers to obtain sufficient guarantees from the Porte for the preservation of their lives.

5. They solicited from the high favour of His Majesty the Sultan the appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam, subject to the approval of the Powers.

6. In consideration of their extreme poverty, they asked for the remission of arrears of taxes and exemption from taxation during a few years.

On the 5th February a final meeting was held, at which Nazaret Chaoush and others, who represented the fighting minority, accepted the above terms, but asked that in future no Turkish garrison should be maintained at Zeitoun.

Decision of Turkish Government.

We communicated the reply of the Zeitounlis to the Ottoman Delegates and to their Excellencies the Ambassadors, and on the 9th February received the final reply of the Porte, by which practically everything which the insurgents had asked for was granted, excepting only the demand for the removal of the garrison.

Conditions.

The Hungchag leaders were to be expelled from Ottoman territory.

His Majesty was disposed to waive the demand for the reconstruction of the barracks, to remit arrears of taxation, to grant exemption of the tax called "miri" during a few years; but the Zeitounlis were to understand that these favours were to be solicited from him by humble petition, rather than stated as conditions of surrender.

The question of the appointment of a Christian Kaïmakam would be settled in conformity with the provisions of the scheme of reforms.

Zeitounlis submit.

The Zeitounlis welcomed these liberal terms with surprise and delight, and at once addressed a telegram of thanks and homage to His Majesty, and a further telegram, expressing their gratitude, to their Excellencies the Ambassadors.

Capitulation.

Description of Zeitoun after the capitulation.

Thus Zeitoun was saved, and immediately after these events we entered the town under the escort of the people, who came out to meet us with every expression of delight and gratitude.

It was a spectacle not easily forgotten. Every roof was packed with refugees as far as the eye could reach, while those who were in houses near at hand rushed down to meet us and beg for food. The streets were strewn with carcases of dead animals, emitting pungent odours, from which there was no escape, for the snow lay in places breast high, and our progress was slow and difficult.

At that time typhus, dysentery, and small-pox were raging in Zeitoun, and at least eighty deaths occurred daily.

Mortality.

It is estimated that nearly 3,000 people must have died of disease or want during two months before our arrival.

The true state of things only became clear some time afterwards, when I began to distribute from house to house the funds sent by the Relief Committee.

People bury the dead in their houses and stables.

I then found that the people, fearing to venture out into the cemeteries during the fighting, had buried their dead in shallow graves, in the houses and stables, or in the streets, and it was my first care to have these bodies disinterred and removed.

Afterwards things greatly improved under the kindly hand of the American missionaries.

Dr. Shepard.

Dr. Shepard, of Aintab, put the hospital into working order, and spent the greater part of March and April in nursing the sick with incessant toil until relieved by Dr. Harris, of Tripoli, and a staff of native doctors from Beyrout; while the missionaries of Marash relieved the wants of the starving both in Zeitoun and the villages.

Armenian villages destroyed during revolt.

The following were the Armenian villages which were wholly or partially destroyed during the revolt:—

Fernouz.	Mujuk Deresi.
Keban.	Geok Ponar.
Chukur-Hissar.	Jamoos Oyook.
Shivilki.	Deghirman Deresi.
Bunduk.	Daongeli.
Yenijé-Kalé.	

Monasteries.

together with the monasteries of Fernouz, Sourp, Purgitch, Yenijé Kalé, and Mujuk Deresi.

Moslem villages destroyed.

The Moslem villages destroyed were the following:—

Andrin.	Mosalli.
Tanur.	Keban.
Deongel.	Chukur-Hissar.
Keremli.	Bisban.
Koshoorké.	Korteil.
Suskoordi.	

Estimate of Armenian losses.

The number of Armenians who perished during the revolt from war, disease, or want, was probably about 6,000. I have no means of estimating the losses of the Moslem population, but I should say they were insignificant in comparison.

Execution of conditions of surrender.

After the capitulation the Consuls remained at Zeitoun to watch over the execution of the conditions of surrender, but up to the present moment they remain incomplete.

Hunchags expelled.

On the 13th February the Hunchag leaders left Zeitoun under escort, and accompanied by my Dragoman and cavass, who were charged not to lose sight of them until they had been embarked for Marseilles at the port of Mersina.

They finally sailed on the 12th March.

Collection of Martini rifles.

It was naturally understood that as soon as the Zeitounlis should have surrendered the Martini rifles the troops, with the exception of the ordinary garrison would be withdrawn. Therefore every effort was made to induce the people to bring them in, but it proved to be a matter of considerable difficulty.

The missing rifles

After a fortnight's search forty-eight only were missing, which the Zeitounlis declared had been lost during the war. This explanation was accepted by us and by the Ottoman Delegates, who reported the fact to Constnatinople, and it was understood that the question was settled; yet, three weeks later, the Porte renewed the demand for the missing rifles, probably as a pretext for not withdrawing the troops.

In the meantime, these were employed in the construction of a carriage road from Zeitoun to the Hamidié Bridge, intended no doubt to facilitate the passage of artillery in the event of Zeitoun again taking up arms.

Withdrawal of troops from Zeitoun.

At length, after long delay, the Porte waived their demand, and on the 21st April the troops were withdrawn.

The Porte then endeavoured to evade its obligation to appoint a Christian Kaïmakam at Zeitoun, and appointed Mahmoud Bey, a Mussulman of Marash; but in consequence of action taken by the Powers, the Sultan has now issued an Iradé nominating a Christian to the post.

Future of Zeitoun

Unfortunately the mediation of the Powers at Zeitoun could not do more than avert the immediate danger. The future of Zeitoun is likely to be a very stormy one, owing to the acute hostility of the Moslem population, which has practically cut them off from communication with the outer world.

London, June 18, 1896.

No. 205.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 231.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 23, 1896, 10·30 A.M.

VICE-CONSUL WILLIAMS telegraphed yesterday from Van as follows:—

"There was a disturbance this morning which is now apparently all over; 15,000 were saved under the British flag. The regular troops and the authorities behaved well. About 400 Armenians were killed in the town, and a considerable number of soldiers and some officers. All Europeans safe, also their property; but I fear great destruction of villages by Kurds. The destruction of house property has been very considerable, but a large number of houses near the Consulate were saved.

"There is great need of relief work."

No. 206.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 473.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 19, 1896.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 215 of to-day, I have the honour to report that two Armenians were hanged at an early hour of the morning of the 15th instant for the murder some time ago of a policeman named Khalil Effendi. The two individuals (whose names were respectively Toros Oghlou Ussep and Agob Oghlou Kevork), were, it would seem, undoubtedly parties to the murder of the policeman who sought to arrest them while in the act of extorting money, by means of threatening letters, from an official named Shahbag Effendi (a renegade Armenian); their trial was conducted publicly, and their condemnation seems to have been based on sufficiently convincing evidence. The men were executed respectively on the bridge at Galata, and at Parmak Kapon, Stamboul, in the presence of a large number of officials, a priest having first administered the last sacraments to the condemned men.

It is generally admitted (and chiefly so by the Armenians subjected to this species of blackmail) that it was high time that some such striking punishment should be inflicted on the persons affiliated to revolutionary societies, who have for months been engaged in extorting money by threats from their wealthier compatriots; but the Armenians recognize with dismay that only Christians ever suffer the death penalty for murder, and that though 60,000 of their fellow countrymen have been butchered during the past ten months, not a single Turk has ever been brought to justice in connection with these awful events.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 207.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 232.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 24, 1896, 1 A.M.*

THE following telegram was received from the Vice-Consul at Diarbekir yesterday:—

"There is no change in the situation here. Is this Vali going to be left here to carry out another massacre? A Committee of Turks, including the General of Brigade and the head of police, has been formed by him for that purpose."

Strong representations in regard to the removal of the Vali were made yesterday by the French Ambassador and myself both at the Palace and the Porte.

No. 208.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 234.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 24, 1896, 10·45 A.M.*

I RECEIVED a telegram from Vice-Consul Williams last night, stating that the rebels are reported to have cut up Mahommedan villages in their retreat, which may bring about reprisals by the Kurds.

He adds situation at Van is still dangerous.

No. 209.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 235.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 25, 1896, 10·30 A.M.*

I RECEIVED the following telegram from Mr. Graves at Erzeroum, dated the 24th June:—

"Vali has given me the following information respecting the disturbance at Van:

"They began on the 15th June, and after four or five days order was restored, but as several thousand Kurds surrounded the city, there is still danger. The missionaries and Her Majesty's Vice-Consul are safe, though the latter was fired at by the Armenians. The number of victims is unknown.

"One battalion and two squadrons from Erzeroum, two battalions from Kharput, and one from Moush, started some days ago for Van. One battalion from Erzingian goes to Keghi, and another is coming here. For the present the expedition against the Dervish Kurds seems to have been abandoned."

No. 210.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 236.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 25, 1896, 10·30 A.M.*

MAJOR WILLIAMS telegraphed last night that everything is going well at Van, and that he believes that all is really over there now.

No. 211.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 237.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 25, 1896, 10·30 A.M.*

THE Druse rising.

Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout has telegraphed that he has heard that ten battalions of Syrian Redifs have been mobilized, and that more are coming from Salonica.

A vessel has arrived at Beyrout from Smyrna with 220 men, under Taher Pasha.

The Porte has informed me that altogether twenty-five battalions of Redifs have been called out in Syria.

No. 212.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 239.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 25, 1896, 3·9 P.M.*

REFERRING to my telegram No. 215: Yesterday another Armenian who had been convicted of murder, was hung in Constantinople.

No. 213.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 29.)

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Van, May 27, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the condition of this district remains anything but satisfactory. During the past week there have been two cases in which Armenian revolutionaries have attacked Kurds. In the first case three Kurds were killed and two wounded, and in the second case two or three were killed. In either the bodies are stated to have been shockingly mutilated. An attempt was also made by the same Society to kill a prominent Armenian banker who lives nearly opposite my house. He sent round to me to ask for assistance, and I sent my cavass to the guard, which succeeded in arresting three men in his garden. Yesterday afternoon an Armenian, known to be a prominent revolutionist, was assassinated just outside the town. It is probable that he was killed by Kurds, as he was one of the party which came in from Persia last autumn, and whose encounter with the Kurds was the beginning of the plundering, &c., which took place here.

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the question is the split which has occurred among the more prominent officials here. The Inspector of Reforms, Saadeddin Pasha, who did nothing during his military promenade amongst the Kurds, has declared himself in direct and open opposition to the Vali. He is now supported by Shemsi Pasha, the local Ferik, who used to be the Vali's chief supporter. The latter, though fanatical, I believe to be an honest man, who thinks that strong measures should be taken against the revolutionary party in this town. Personally, I think he is to a certain extent right, but as I told him two days ago, the Kurds must be punished at the same time if there is to be permanent peace in this country. The Vali, who talks most freely to me, is of the opinion that some of the Kurdish Chiefs must be exiled. He is anxious to catch the revolutionary Chief also, but is of opinion that the small fry should be left alone. I have entered into these details to show how necessary it is that Shakir Pasha should come here as soon as possible. He is respected by both Turks and Christians, and is the only person at present available who can manage this district.

As regards the alleged raid of the Nestorians on the Kurds, I can find out nothing about it. Certainly nothing happened like what your Excellency inquired about. The Nestorians are perfectly quiet, and I can hear of no feeling against them. I have just heard of an unjust demand for taxation by the local authorities at Zulamerik, and shall bring the matter to the Vali's notice to-morrow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 214.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 474.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 20, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, reporting the consecration of a Russian Church close to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 214.

Consul Dickson to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Jerusalem, June 6, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatches of the 12th and 15th October, 1893, respectively, in which I reported an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the "Russian Palestine Society" to open a Russian school in their building contiguous to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, I have the honour to inform you that the Society had, in the same building, fitted up a church dedicated to St. Alexander Nevsky, but that hitherto they have been unable to have it consecrated, the Greek Patriarch refusing to perform this ceremony on the plea that no Firman had yet been issued for the church, but in reality from a disinclination to encourage the pretensions of Russia to interfere in the Greek Orthodox religious services in the Holy City.

Recently, however, the Greek Patriarch received a letter from His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, specially requesting his Beatitude to perform the ceremony in question, and the 3rd instant was accordingly chosen for the consecration. The religious service, which was celebrated by the Patriarch with very great solemnity, was attended by the Acting Russian Consul-General and all the staff of the Consulate in full uniform; by General Alexis Neidhart, Secretary to the late Emperor, and who is again on a visit to Jerusalem; by the Russian Archimandrite, and by the Russian and Greek clergy, as well as by a large number of Russian pilgrims and natives. At the conclusion of the ceremony the Palestine Society gave an entertainment to the Patriarch, the Acting Russian Consul-General, and the Greek and Russian clergy in their buildings, which were gaily decorated with flags for the occasion.

This ceremony of consecration, although of not much significance in itself, assumes considerable importance when viewed in connection with Russian political aims towards securing a control over the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and consequently over the Greek clergy in the East. The church just consecrated is in close proximity to that of the Holy Sepulchre, and before long some pretext will readily be found for interference in the great annual religious festivals which take place in the latter edifice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 215.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 175.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 20, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 446 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting the massing of troops on the coast, the departure of troops for Crete, and the general inefficiency of the troops in Asia Minor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 215.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Mersina, June 3, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish authorities continue to mass troops, towards the coast, from Swédieh to Adalia.

There are some 20,000 men on the coast in the Province of Adana.

During the last few days some troops, 1,500 to 2,000 in all, have been shipped towards Crete.

The object of the massing of troops towards the coast appears to be a feared landing by the British—an idea originated, doubtless, by some other Power.

These wretched troops are unclothed, unfed, unpaid, and unprovided with any

reserve of ammunition beyond some fifty rounds carried personally. They are discontented and semi-mutinous. The cavalry consists of a few men mounted on miserable ponies, and artillery there is none.

These remarks apply to all the troops seen in Asia Minor since my arrival. In these remote parts any money forthcoming from Constantinople, which is not much, barely suffices for the need of those through whose hands it passes, and the equipment for which it is granted remains unprovided.

The military state of this country is miserable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 216.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 476.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 20, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting on the general political condition of the province, and the improvement that has so far been attained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 216.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Mersina, June 3, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency the following General Report on the political and economical state of my province, based upon personal observation since my arrival, and during my recent journey to the north and east of the province.

The Mussulman population, as well as the majority of Turkish officials, foster a feeling of hatred, and a desire for revenge for their resistance at Zeitoun, against the Christians, quite ignoring the acts of brutality committed by themselves throughout the land.

They display this by their general behaviour, by overt acts of oppression, such as excessive pressure in the collecting of taxes, even from poverty-stricken families, seizure by force and without payment of articles by the soldiery and others in the bazaars and villages, casting into prison on false evidence, maltreatment of Christians who venture to their fields, and by many other acts, which would make it appear as though it were a fixed plan to drive these people into open revolt in order to give a plausible excuse for further massacre.

The situation, for the moment, is outwardly quiet, but one hour may kindle a blaze. Thus, recently, it was feared that the soldiery would plunder the principal towns as they had received no pay for many months, and it was only through foreign Consular intervention that a most serious disturbance was averted.

I would beg to record my opinion that it is only possible, under present political conditions, to maintain a certain degree of security and justice for the Christian population by means of Consular officers who move through the more remote parts of the country, and who show the Government authorities, by their zeal and energy, that they are personally informed of all that occurs, and who appear suddenly in a part where least expected. I am of opinion that, without such personal movement, no practical good is attained through remonstrances, which are always met by contradictions and prevarications, whereas these are rendered impossible if representations be made on *personal* observation and verification of reports received.

The Christian population is quiet. The spirit of desire to irritate the Mussulmans by threats of external aid no longer exists. They are almost completely disarmed.

Those parts of the province situated within the observation of foreigners, and on the coast where foreign men-of-war have been present, are almost free from danger. It is in the more remote districts, and where the Christian native population is numerous, that danger exists, and it is there that the presence of Consular officers,

from time to time, is indispensable. I have the strongest proof of this as the result of my own recent journey to Hadjin, Sis, Shah, and Osmanié.

In conclusion, I would assure your Excellency that the state of this province is improving, and, if the approach of winter brings with it no untoward event, there is a hope that the relations of the two religions towards each other may gradually improve also.

I have obtained the unimpeded distribution of relief at Hadjin, the cleansing of that most filthy town which threatened to cause an epidemic as serious as that of Zeitoun, patrols on roads to secure safe traffic in trade and agriculture, the evacuation of two Christian churches turned into barracks for the soldiery, less oppression in the collection of taxes, greater justice in the trial of cases against Christians, and a more tolerant feeling generally of Mussulman to Christian.

I will ask your Excellency to sanction, later, a second visit to those parts, the most important of my province, so as to endeavour to complete what has, so far, only been commenced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 217.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 477.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 20, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, forwarding a Report from the British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 217.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Bagdad, May 23, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour very respectfully to submit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a news-letter, dated the 13th May last, from Mr. N. Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c,
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 217.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

Mosul, May 13, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that Sheikh Maaruf and Seyyed Ahmed Effendi, about whom I communicated some information in my letter No. 16, arrived at Mosul last week, and were at the same moment cast into prison by the order of his Excellency Abdullah Pasha, but after about thirty-six hours they were released and forced to leave Mosul.

On the 7th of this month a Kaïmakam, named Kamil Effendi, arrived here from Constantinople for Zako, and after waiting upon his Excellency the Wali, proceeded to the place of his duties with necessary orders; his predecessor was ordered to return to Chamchamal, one of the districts of Suleimanieh.

His Excellency summoned Haji Agha, Chief of the Kochar tribe, Kaïmakam (Lieutenant-Colonel) of the Hamidieh troops, to inquire into the numerous complaints made against him, and after obtaining Imperial orders for his being put to trial, caused his sword and insignia of rank to be taken from him, and himself to be cast into prison, and directed the Court of First Instance to hear the complaints made against him. His Excellency sent an officer to count his sheep and the sheep of his tribe of which he, through his influence, has concealed from the officer more than half in past years.

The late Wali left Mosul the day before yesterday, viâ Deir, without getting an Imperial grant which he expected for the expenses of his journey.

Some days ago a detachment of troops having attacked the tribe of Hakarieh located in the district of Akr, and taken about 2,000 sheep and numerous cattle, brought them to town yesterday, and the authorities commenced selling them.

His Excellency the Wali is said to have summoned to town all the tribal Chiefs of the district of Akr, Zibar, Amadieh, and Dhok, being disturbers and oppressors, in order to place them in arrest, and perhaps to banish some of them.

No. 218.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 480.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 367 of the 7th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, with regard to the non-execution of the reforms and affairs in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 218.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Diarbekir, June 9, 1896.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive Sir P. Currie's Circular despatches of the 8th and 9th ultimo on the subject of the proposed reforms and Shakir Pasha's tour of inspection.

With regard to the paper of questions inclosed in the first of the above despatches it would be useless to attempt to fill it up, simply because not only has there been no question of carrying out the reforms in this vilayet, but no attempt has been made to repair the damage done to the Christians during the massacres, and until their wives and daughters are restored to them, and something done to render the ruined villages habitable, and assure to them the bare means of existence, it would be a mere mockery to talk about instituting reformed nahiés, "Conseils des Anciens," &c.

Summer is now advancing and harvest approaching, and thousands of Christians are still houseless and without means of reaping or storing whatever crops there may be. Throughout the vilayet there is the greatest anxiety among the Christians not for the application of reforms but simply for their existence in the near future. The Kurds continue to threaten, and those who did not take part in the massacre and pillage, or protected the Christians, now openly express their regret, as they lost a chance of enriching themselves and appear to be regarded with disfavour by the Government.

I found a similar state of feeling among the Syrians of Mardin to what exists among the Armenians here, though the former have not suffered to the same extent as the latter. There are no Gregorian Armenians there, and only some 1,500 Armenian Catholics out of a total Christian population in the town of perhaps 12,000. There is, therefore, no "Armenian question" there, and generally Christians and Moslems live together on unusually good terms, but I found the same fears expressed with regard to the future, and complaints of inaction and apathy on the part of the Government in checking the Kurds or helping the Christians. None of the Kurds who raided the villages in that district have been punished any more than elsewhere.

The Vali returned on the 7th instant from the district of Silouan, leaving it in a worse condition than he found it, which is saying a good deal. I have already had the honour to report on the bad effect produced by the return to that district of Hadji Feshid Aga in company with the Vali; this took place on the 9th ultimo, and the conduct of the Vali while he has been there does not seem to have been such as to reassure the Christians, who complain that the attitude of the Kurds has become more hostile than before. The Vali found fault with a certain Mohammed Effendi, a Captain in the army, who did a great deal to prevent a massacre in the town of Farkin, and threatened to have him removed, and in general showed himself entirely hostile to the Christians and indisposed to listen to or remedy their grievances.

With regard to Shakir Pasha's proposed visit here, I consider that unless he first seriously takes in hand the question of recovering the Christian captives, men, women, and children (in some Kurdish villages, especially in the Bisherri district there are several of both sexes), and of restoring the Christian villages and securing to the Christian villagers in general their means of existence, and unless the Vali and one or two other prominent offenders among the officials, such as Azimet Pasha, the Head of the Gendarmerie, are dismissed, he will do more harm than good by trying to inaugurate abortive schemes of reform. There will be time enough to institute other reforms when these fundamental ones shall have been obtained.

According to lists I have had drawn upon the spot there are upwards of 31,500 Christians in various degrees of destitution in the districts of Diarbekir, Silouan, Bisherri, and Lidja, about 6,500 in the Mardin Province, and many more in Palou, Chinkoosh, Chermook, and Severek. The numbers show no tendency to diminish, but rather the reverse. Unless something is done for these people more than the distribution of relief which enables them to live from day to day, it looks as if more were likely to die of hunger next winter than died in the massacres last November.

Possibly it might do some good if Shakir Pasha were definitely instructed from Constantinople to devote his attention primarily to the points I have mentioned and to find a remedy for this state of things. He ought to visit some of the villages in the districts himself, and not to trust to mendacious reports from the local authorities, and also see for himself that whatever remedies he may suggest are really applied.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 219.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 481.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput reporting that a collection is being made by the authorities for the relief of the destituto in the Maamuret-ul-Aziz district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Kharput, June 6, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram of the 4th instant reporting that relief funds intrusted to Mr. Gates for distribution were exhausted, and to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, regarding the condition of the inhabitants of certain villages I had visited, I now have the honour to report that the authorities here have begun to raise, in the following manner, a subscription for the indigent in this province.

Tickets bearing the names of the subscribers, and specifying the sum to be contributed by each of them, are sent to such Armenians and Mussulmans in the town as are in a condition to contribute. The civil functionaries are further, I am informed, invited to pay a certain percentage from their salaries towards this relief fund, in proportion to the amount of remuneration received by them.

The money thus collected may, if fairly distributed, help to temporarily relieve a few of the destitute and homeless in the vilayet, but will hardly lessen the gravity of the situation of the Armenians in general of these parts. The food, bedding, clothes, and money distributed by the various Relief Committees have sufficed hitherto to keep, Mr. Gates tells me, the people alive for the time being, without, however, materially affecting their future prospects, which, at present, he considers as well-nigh hopeless; as, after exhausting the little money and food material received, the majority of them relapse into their previous misery through the lack of means for reinstating themselves in their former trades or avocations.

Mr. Gates further informs me that there will be an urgent demand, before the harvest can be reaped, for a fresh distribution of food among the villagers of the

Kharput Plain, and that if no further funds are forthcoming, the Red Cross Society may feel compelled to provide for the more immediate needs of the people, and in that case will be unable to continue furnishing the oxen, farming implements, and tools required for more permanent relief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 220.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 482.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput on the subject of the formation of new nahiés and the appointment of their Mudirs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 220.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Kharput, June 7, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith translation of a paragraph published in the "Maamuret-ul-Aziz" of last week relative to the formation of nahiés and the election of their Mudirs.

Sami Bey, member of the Commission of Control, who is now at Kharput, informed me, in the course of a conversation upon the subject of reforms, that the delimitation of the nahiés would be the first step in the execution of the reforms contemplated in this vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 220.

Extract from the "Maamuret-ul-Aziz."

(Translation.)

ONE item in the scheme of Imperial reforms being the formation of nahiés and the appointment of Mudirs to the districts delimitated from among the villages attached to the chief town of the vilayet, certain persons chosen by the decision of the Administrative Council from among the various civil functionaries and religious Heads of the province, will shortly proceed to the various "cariés" (hamlets) to take up their duties and superintend the election of the Mudirs in question.

No. 221.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 483.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas reporting the arrival of Shakir Pasha, and making suggestions with regard to certain of the reforms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 221.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Mr. Herbert.

Sivas, June 16, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that Shakir Pasha arrived here yesterday. He was met at some distance from the town by representatives of the Gregorian, Catholic, and Protestant Armenians, and received with apparent enthusiasm. No one was there on the part of the Greeks, but I am informed this was an oversight, and has no political insignificance. Shakir Pasha intends to leave for Kharput in about three weeks, and to return to Sivas next winter, after having visited the Vilayets of Bitlis, Van, and Diarbekir. When at Erzinjan, he informed me that he had decided to go to Diarbekir next, and not visit Sivas till the autumn, but when he found the road from Erzinjan to Diarbekir was impassable for carriages, he was obliged to alter his decision, and he decided to go to Kara-Hissar, and by that route to Sivas. The road to Kara-Hissar was found to be quite impracticable for carriages, and almost dangerous for horses, and he was accordingly obliged to come straight to Sivas by Enderes and Jara. The town of Enderes (or Soucheri) is the seat of Government, and owing to its being at the extreme end of the "caya," is very inconveniently situated. It was the intention of Shakir Pasha to remove the Government to a more central place, but on arriving there, he proposed, instead, to alter the division of some of the cazas, and by this, to bring Enderes more in the centre of its district, and better adapted to the needs of its inhabitants.

In the town of Enderes the Christian population forms the majority, and in the caza the totals of Christian and Mussulman are about equal, and I suggested that if Christian Kaïmakams were appointed, it would be a suitable place. Shakir Pasha stated that this was not the case, and that the Mussulmans had a considerable majority.

I gave as authority for my statement "La Turquie d'Asie par Vital Cuinet." He also said, that in the present state of tension and animosity that exists in this district between Turks and Armenians, it was inexpedient to appoint Christian Kaïmakams, but necessary to wait till the two races were more reconciled before doing so. In this I concur fully, but I expressed a hope that Christian Muavins would be shortly appointed, as such appointments might hasten the reconciliation between the two races, which he considered so necessary to wait for, and I mentioned Kara-Hissar and Gurun as two places where a large Christian population existed.

I referred, also, to the system of collecting taxes, by means of sending zaptiehs into the villages, and hoped this would be put an end to, and special agents appointed. He informed me this would be done.

I also said that it was a matter of congratulation that a sufficient number of Christians had applied for admission into the gendarmes, and hoped that this force would soon be raised. He told me that much of the delay in this was due to the correspondence on the matter with Constantinople, but that he hoped to complete it soon. Shakir Pasha referred to the Councils that it was proposed to form in villages. I stated that it was my conviction that these Councils were impracticable, as there could be no freedom in either the election of members or expression of opinion, and that probably the Armenians would be instructed whom to elect, and should they not do so, would be threatened with death. He disagreed on this point, and said the elections would be free. I asked if the village guards proposed in the reforms (Article 24) would be appointed, and offered an opinion that the existing police and gendarmes were available for such duties and the appointment of a new force unnecessary. He differed, and explained at some length the advantages that would be derived from these village guards. I expressed a hope, as he had pointed out the great advantages of these guards, that they would soon be appointed, but as this is only a temporary visit, it is probable that the fulfilment of most of the reforms will be delayed till the autumn.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 222.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 485.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 466 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mush, reporting that orders have now been received annulling all the arrangements made for new nahiés in the sandjak, and that all the recently appointed Mudirs have consequently been dismissed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 222.

Vice-Consul Hampson to Mr. Herbert.

Mush, June 10, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 1st June, I have the honour to inform you that orders have now been received here annulling all the arrangements made for new nahiés in this sandjak. In accordance with these orders, the nahiés will now be distributed as follows: Mush Caza, six; Melasgird, four; Varto, six; Boulanik, three; Sasoun, six.

All the newly appointed Mudirs have therefore been dismissed, which, in nearly every case, is a distinct gain. It remains to be seen whether those subsequently chosen are an improvement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 223.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 486.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1896.*

ON receipt of Major Williams' telegram of the 16th instant, which I repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 312 of the 17th instant, I instructed Mr. Block to make representations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the critical state of affairs at Van, and to request his Excellency to send telegraphic instructions both to the civil and military authorities there to prevent further disorder and bloodshed in the town and the neighbourhood and outlying districts of the province.

In reply to this communication, Mr. Block was given a copy of a telegram which had been addressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Ottoman Ambassadors accredited to the six great Powers, giving the Turkish version of the causes of the disturbance, and which has doubtless been communicated to your Lordship by Costaki Anthopoulo Pasha.

On the 18th instant Mr. Block called again upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier, and was shown, confidentially, the original of this telegram which the Porte had received from Van. He informs me that he noticed that it stated that the revolutionists were foreigners from Persia and Russia, and, what is more significant, that the authorities had not sufficient troops, and strongly urged the necessity for reinforcements. He was also informed that the most stringent orders had been sent by the Porte and the Palace to prevent a renewal of the disorders within and without the town; that the roads leading into the town had been blocked to prevent the Kurds from making an attack, and that orders had been sent to the regular officers commanding Hamidié Kurdish cavalry regiments to keep their men quiet, and to the leading Kurdish and Turkish Notables not to allow their followers to move.

Mr. Block dwelt on the necessity of restraining the Kurds and preventing massacres, and pointed out that, according to the reports received by this Embassy,

the Vilayet of Van was generally in a disturbed state, and that if prompt and efficacious measures were not taken the disturbances would spread to the surrounding districts, and even to Bitlis and Mush, and he reminded the Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs that Her Majesty's Embassy had given the Porte timely warning, and had begged them to send Shakir Pasha to Van to restore order. The Grand Vizier replied that it was now too late, as Shakir Pasha was in the Vilayet of Sivas, a distance of 130 hours march, but his Highness trusted that the measures which were being taken by the Porte would have a salutary effect. He denied, however, that the vilayet was in so bad a state, and said that he believed in the ability of the Governor-General and Saadeddin Pasha, the Imperial Commissioner, whose report of a journey in the province was forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 471 of the 17th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 224.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 29.)

(No. 489. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 24, 1896.

AT the request of the Armenian Patriarch, M. Mosditchian, his Private Secretary, called on me a few days ago to call my attention to the countless arrests of Armenians which have lately been made every day in Constantinople, and to the continuance of the persecution of innocent Armenians by the Turkish Government throughout the Ottoman Dominions.

Things had come to such a pass, he said, that his co-religionists were arrested now if they walked too fast in the street, or if they walked too slow, if they smiled, or if they looked gloomy. Although, for the present, there were no fresh massacres *en gros* the destruction of Armenians *en détail* was being carried on everywhere, and, in fact, such systematic and unrelenting persecution had no parallel in the world's history.

Great pressure had been put upon the Patriarch during the last few months to induce him to resign both by the Turkish Government and by the Armenian Effendis or Government employés, but as long as his Beatitude thought he could be of any use to his flock he had refused to leave his post. Now, however, that his Beatitude saw that even the Six Powers, in spite of all their representations, were unable to make the Turkish Government appoint a Christian Governor at Zeitoun, he began to realize how hopeless his position was, and, although he had not yet fully made up his mind, it was probable that he would not hold out much longer; and that he would be obliged to abandon his people to the mercy of God.

Should his Beatitude resign, M. Mosditchian went on to say, it was not likely that the Turkish Government would allow the Armenian Assembly to meet for the purpose of choosing his successor; and the Sultan would in all probability appoint a creature of his own to replace him.

I asked M. Mosditchian whether he believed that, if the Patriarch resigned, the Sultan would relax in severity towards the Armenians. He replied that he was not of that opinion, for he was convinced that the Turkish Government had but one aim in view, and that was the extermination of the Armenian race.

In connection with this statement I am informed, on very good authority, that in pious and well-regulated Mussulman households the Divine aid is now invoked in their daily morning prayer to bring about the destruction of all Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 225.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 29.)

(No. 490.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 24, 1896.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 486 of the 24th instant, I have during the last five days caused repeated representations to be made to the Grand Vizier, the

Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Sultan's first Secretary, urging the necessity of energetic measures for the maintenance of order in the town of Van and its neighbourhood, and reminding them that Her Majesty's Embassy had for long past foreseen and warned the Sublime Porte that trouble was sure to occur in that province. Both the Palace and the Porte, as was to be expected, threw the whole blame for the recent disturbances on the Armenians, and declined to admit that the Administration was either weak or deficient; they assured me, however, that every possible instruction had been sent to the civil and military authorities at Van to maintain order and prevent any attack on the town by the Kurds, and the Foreign Minister has since informed me that three battalions of infantry and some cavalry are being sent there.

In regard to Major Williams' suggestion (see my telegram No. 217 of the 19th instant), that a large sum of money should be sent to Van for payment of arrears to the troops, the Grand Vizier stated that a certain sum was available there, and would be employed for that object.

I also requested on the 23rd instant that fresh instructions might be sent to the authorities to insure the protection of the Consuls and missionaries as well as of the women and children, and asked that the troops should be authorized to use their rifles if necessary to repel the attacks of the Kurds and the Turkish population. The Foreign Minister assured me that the instructions to protect Consuls, Missionaries, and all unoffending persons were most categorical, and that in case of necessity those requiring protection would be received into the Citadel.

I learn from Tewfik Pasha that the Vali has tendered his resignation, as he considers that the moment is one when the authority should be wielded by the military. I understand that he has proposed Saadeddin Pasha as his successor.

In view of the excellence of Nazim Pasha's administration, during his tenure of office at Van, and of the reports of Saadeddin Pasha's character, which are far from favourable, the change is to be regretted; at the same time, it will be difficult to object to Saadeddin's Pasha nomination if actually proposed by Nazim Pasha.

It appears after all that the Russian Consul has not returned to Van as was believed by the Porte and the Russian Embassy, and Major Williams has therefore been acting with the Dominican Father and the Persian Consul only.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 226.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 29.)

(No. 491.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 24, 1896.

ON receipt of Reports from Her Majesty's Consular officers at Beyrout and Damascus, Sir P. Currie caused inquiries to be made at the Sublime Porte with regard to the barbarous acts which were committed under the eyes of the military authorities at Mejdelshems on the 28th November last, during the recent campaign against the Druses in the Hauran.

In reply to these representations, the inclosed documents addressed by the Vali of Beyrout to the Grand Vizier, were communicated to Mr. Block by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and forwarded by Sir P. Currie to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, for any observations which he might have to offer.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of Mr. Drummond Hay's reply.

As your Lordship will observe, Mr. Drummond Hay repeats his statement that the official version of the incident at Mejdelshems is incorrect, and adds that even admitting that the Druses were the aggressors, the fact remains incontestable that their villages were ransacked and burnt by the Bedouins in the presence of the Turkish troops under Memdouh Pasha.

The inhabitants took refuge in the Lebanon and other mountainous parts of the country and were only induced to return to their villages in the plain on receiving assurances from the Vali of Damascus that they would not be molested. Contrary, however, to the pledges given by the authorities, they were subjected to most arbitrary treatment; several of their Sheikhs were imprisoned, all arms were seized, and the majority of the men were enrolled for military service.

This incident is another example of the *punica fides* of the Turkish Government. Notwithstanding the publication of an official communiqué in the Turkish newspapers (copy of which was sent home in Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 187 of the 11th March) stating that after several brilliant victories over the Druses, the campaign in the Hauran was ended and order had been restored, the state of the country appears to be anything but satisfactory. As a matter of fact the fighting element of the Druse population had never been subdued; they had merely withdrawn to the mountain fastnesses of the Hauran and the Legah, whilst the Turks burnt their villages in the plain, and were ready to recommence operations as soon as the opportunity presented itself, as instanced by their recent attacks on the Turkish troops reported in my telegrams Nos. 219 and 221 of the 19th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 226.

Substance of a Communication from the Vali of Beyrout to the Grand Vizier, dated February 8, 1896.

VOTRE Altesse m'a fait savoir que l'Ambassade d'Angleterre avait exprimé le désir de connaître les détails de l'incident Druse. En réponse, j'ai l'honneur de soumettre à votre Altesse que cet incident avait été beaucoup exagéré. Voici à quoi il se réduit d'après les renseignements parvenus au Gouvernement. Ce fait a son origine dans la conduite aggressive que les Druses ont usée pendant longtemps contre les Circassiens et les Bédouins, ainsi que dans les aggressions que les Druses prétendent avoir été commises dernièrement à leur détriment par des Circassiens et des Bédouins uniquement dans un but de vengeance. A la suite de cela, les Druses des environs se sont réunis et ont attaqué d'une manière sauvage les Circassiens et les Bédouins. Mais il n'y a pas lieu d'exagérer la portée de cet incident ni de s'occuper maintenant des faits attribués jadis aux Circassiens et aux Bédouins, et qui ne sont en définitif que de simples délits. Le fait est que les attroupements des Druses ont été dispersés par la gendarmerie, qui est venue au secours des Circassiens et des Bédouins. La localité de Medjdil-i-Chems dépend du Caza de Kantiré, situé dans le Vilayet de Syrie

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Inclosure 2 in No. 226.

Substance of a Telegram sent by the Vali of Syria to the Vali of Beyrout, dated November 30, 1895.

EN vue d'empêcher une attaque contre les Druses de Mejdil-i-Chems, on avait expédié au Caza de Kantiré un nombre suffisant de troupes régulières et de gendarmes, et les communications nécessaires avaient été faites aux Chefs Circassiens ainsi qu'aux Chefs de la tribu Fazl.

Les Druses de Mejdil se trouvaient depuis quinze jours sur les montagnes et avaient attiré auprès d'eux un grand nombre des leurs. Les recommandations nécessaires leur avaient été adressées par l'entremise de Tahir Bey Chemsi pour qu'ils se dispersent. Malgré cela, pour pouvoir mettre leurs projets à exécution ils ont accusé sans raison les Circassiens d'avoir tué deux Druses, et d'avoir brûlé le champ de Maghsana, et ont aussi mis en avant injustement un tas d'autres prétextes pour se soulever. En effet, Samedi, environ 1,500 cavaliers et fantassins divisé en deux camps, attaquèrent du côté du village de Mansourah, les uns les Circassiens et les autres la tribu Fazl. Ils se sont servi de leurs armes aussi contre les gendarmes qui avaient été envoyés sur les lieux pour empêcher cette aggression. Ces derniers ont riposté et ont dissous leur rassemblement. Sur cela on a expédié sur les lieux des forces militaires suffisantes pour saisir les Druses qui avaient donné lieu à cette aggression. Telles sont les circonstances exactes de cet incident.

Inclosure 3 in No. 226.

Consul Drummond Hay to Mr. Herbert.

Beyrout, June 3, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to Sir Philip Currie's despatch of the 21st April, I have the honour to return herewith the two documents received from the Sublime Porte relating to the recent campaign against the Druses in the Hauran, and to state that the official version of the occurrence at Mejdil Shems is inexact, as was pointed out in my despatch of the 12th December, 1895. The Report of the Vali of Beyrout to the Grand Vizier, dated the 8th February last, emanated from the same source, and is therefore equally misleading.

Even admitting that the Druses were the aggressors at Mejdil Shems, the fact remains incontestable that the Druse villages were ransacked and burnt by the Bedouins in the presence of the Turkish troops under Memdouh Pasha.

When the inhabitants, who had taken refuge in the Lebanon and other parts of the country, subsequently returned to their villages with assurances from the Vali of Damascus that they would not be molested, they were subjected to most arbitrary treatment. Several of their Sheikhs were imprisoned, all arms were seized, and the majority of the men were enrolled for military service.

I have now learnt from a reliable source that instructions were lately received by the Vali of Damascus to inquire into the condition of the Druses of Hasbeya, Mejdil Shems, and Koneitra, to assess the damages and losses they sustained from the depredations of the Bedouins, and to waive all claims of the Government for arrears of taxes.

The Vali immediately dismissed the Kaïmakams of Hasbeya and Koneitra, and dispatched a military officer to the districts with instructions to report on the claims and grievances of the Druses.

A missionary who lately visited that part of the country informed me that all the Druse villages had suffered more or less. He had passed through one entirely destroyed by fire and deserted.

The people were grateful for the removal of the Kaïmakams, but they doubted the sincerity of the authorities, and feared that the moneys raised for their account would be diverted into other channels.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 227.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 29.)

(No. 492. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 24, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Fitzmaurice, written at Aleppo, reporting on the manner in which the members of the Birejik Commission have acted so far, and suggesting that he should have an official or semi-official status on the Commission.

Mr. Fitzmaurice telegraphed to me from Birejik on the 17th instant in the same sense, but I informed him in reply that I did not think it advisable that he should form part of the Commission, and that he should confine himself to watching its proceedings and giving its members assistance and advice.

Sir Philip Currie, before his departure on leave, informed Tewfik Pasha that Mr. Fitzmaurice was proceeding to Birejik to assist the Commission only, and not to form part of it. Moreover, if he had an official status on the Commission he would, to a certain extent, become responsible for its action and its conclusions, which would be obviously undesirable.

Pending your Lordship's instructions, therefore, and unless Mr. Fitzmaurice telegraphs that he is unable to accomplish anything without being officially recognized as a member of the Commission, I do not propose to take any action with the authorities here in the sense he suggests.

I have made the necessary arrangements in regard to his cypher, and I shall not fail to support his proposals for the punishment of certain Mussulmans at Birejik, as soon as I hear from him.

A very strong feeling against Mr. Fitzmaurice unfortunately exists at this moment in Turkish official circles, owing to the recent publication of his Reports, and I am informed that a missionary, named Christie, who visited Birejik a short time ago in connection with some relief work, was shot at by Mussulmans, "who mistook him for a Consul."

I have repeatedly requested the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs to take every measure to protect Mr. Fitzmaurice and to insure his safety, but in view of the spirit of fanaticism which prevails in the Birejik district, I confess that I shall be considerably relieved when his mission is concluded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 227.

Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Mr. Herbert.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Aleppo, June* 12, 1896.

ON my arrival here the Vali informed me that he had no information or instructions regarding the Birejik Commission or myself. At my request he inquired, by telegraph, of the Kaïmakam of Birejik concerning the whereabouts of the Commission. The Kaïmakam replied that, since the Commission's recent visit to and departure from Birejik, he had no knowledge of its movements, but on the following day he telegraphed to the Vali that the Commission had suddenly returned to Birejik.

This Commission on its recent visit to Birejik proceeded to the Armenian church lately converted into a mosque, applauded the conduct of the converts in having so transformed it, remarked that there were but two things wanting, viz., a minaret and a water-supply for ablution purposes, and then proceeded to officially inaugurate it by performing their "Namaz" in it.

I refrain from comment.

I have induced the Vali to give me letters to the Birejik authorities, stating that I am to take part in the proceedings of the Commission, and as I am convinced the Commissioners have no instructions to that effect, I presume that on my arrival there they will apply for instructions on the subject from Constantinople; and should you deem fit to make representations in the same sense to the Palace, His Majesty might consent to give me an official or semi-official status on the Commission, an arrangement which would greatly increase my power of doing good.

The Vali has done so at my request, and without instructions from Constantinople, and I would beg that his action may not be mentioned to the Constantinople authorities, as it would expose him to reproach.

In my Ourfa report, I mentioned that the only way to prevent the continued disastrous consequences, and probable renewal of the recent disorders, is the stern punishment, not by the ordinary Courts, but by extraordinary functionaries, of the ringleaders, and I now learn that the Constantinople authorities, after last week's attempted massacre at Aintab, having apparently arrived at the same conclusion, have dispatched thither from Ourfa the General of Division, Ahmed Lufti Pasha, son-in-law of Ghazi Osman Pasha, and three days ago sent him instructions to find out the ringleaders, and banish or otherwise punish them administratively without having recourse to the judicial authorities. Should Ahmed Lutfi Pasha take some such measures, it cannot fail to produce a good effect in the Aleppo region, and should I, on my arrival at Birejik, succeed in convincing the Commission of the advisability of recommending a similar course to the Palace, I shall inform your Excellency by telegram, if provided with cyphers, and am sure that representations by Her Majesty's Embassy in the same sense will greatly contribute towards their obtaining the desired instructions. To that end I give the following names of the Mussulmans who, in my opinion, ought to be exiled from Birejik:—

(1) Ahmed Effendi, Head of the Municipality (Belediyyé rëisi); (2) Nefi Effendi, former Secretary to the Birejik Local Government (tahrirat Kiatibisabik); and (3, 4, and 5) the three "Chonponzadeler," especially the eldest, Muslim Agha.

Should I not find it possible when at Birejik to enable the Armenians there to return to Christianity, and continue to live there without the risk of being

massacred, I have great hope of inducing the Government to allow them to migrate to Ourfa, Aintab, and Aleppo, where they can profess Christianity. I have spoken in that sense to the Vali, and his Excellency has made similar recommendations to the Porte, which I trust will not insist on those who migrate returning to Birejik, where they will once more be obliged to become Mussulmans.

I have written this despatch so full of conditions here at Aleppo, and before proceeding to Birejik, because the possibility of my being unprovided with cyphers will there prevent me from rapidly communicating at length with Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. FITZMAURICE.

No. 228.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 29.)

(No. 497.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 25, 1896.

ON receipt of Mr. Hallward's telegram in regard to the serious situation at Diarbekir, which I had the honour to repeat to your Lordship, I consulted the French Ambassador, who had received similar information from his Consul, and we decided to make at once strong representations, both at the Porte and the Palace, and to insist once more on the dismissal of the Vali. I accordingly called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and, on the 22nd instant, after showing him Mr. Hallward's telegrams, earnestly impressed upon him the necessity of appointing a new Governor-General of Diarbekir in the place of Eumi Pasha.

The latter, I said, according to information furnished by both the English and French Consuls, was deeply implicated in the massacres last year, and I reminded his Excellency that the six Embassies had already demanded his dismissal many months ago, and that the Sultan had promised at one moment that this request should be complied with. I also pointed out that whenever the intervention of the Embassy or of our Consular officers was sought for by the Turkish Government to help them out of their difficulties it was readily agreed to, but, on the other hand, it was to be noticed with regret that whenever we gave the Turkish Government any advice they never followed it. Had they done so, the state of the country would not have been so deplorable, and the Porte would not have been obliged to seek foreign intervention to restore order, as they had just done in the case of the disturbances at Van. It was difficult to understand, I added, the reasons for keeping on this official, when it was patent to every one that the country he administered was going from bad to worse; and I concluded by expressing the hope that the Sultan would this time give definite and immediate orders for his removal.

Tewfik Pasha, who invariably pretends to agree with any arguments which one may advance, admitted that Eumi Pasha was a bad Governor, and stated that he and the Council of Ministers had long ago proposed a new Vali for Diarbekir, but he promised to again bring the matter before his colleagues.

Mr. Block made similar representations at the Palace, which were also supported by the French Dragoman.

I also addressed a signed note to the Porte on the same day, copy of which is inclosed herewith, warning them that if a repetition of the events of last year occurred at Diarbekir, the Turkish Government would be held directly responsible. M. Cambon sent in a note in the same sense, but it was couched—so I understand—in much stronger language.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 228.

Mr. Herbert to Tewfik Pasha.

M. le Ministre, *Therapia, June* 22, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir reports by telegraph that arms and powder are being distributed among

the Kurds, that the Mussulmans are again threatening the Armenians, and that fears of a fresh massacre are entertained at that place.

In bringing these facts to your notice, I desire once more to call your Excellency's attention to the conduct of the Vali to whom this state of affairs is due, and whose removal is absolutely necessary to put an end to the panic which prevails. I have the honour at the same time to warn your Excellency that should a repetition of the deplorable events of last year take place at Diarbekir, the Turkish Government will be held directly responsible.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 229.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 247.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 29, 1896, 10·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding telegram.

Following is a succinct résumé of a message from the Sultan in regard to the Armenian question, which was also communicated to me by Izzet Bey:—

"The Sultan complained bitterly of the way in which England supported the Armenians, and of the recent massacre of Moslems at Van by the latter. British Consular officials had, unwittingly perhaps, encouraged the Armenians, so that the latter looked to England for protection rather than to him. Whereas in former years England had interested herself in the welfare of all His Majesty's subjects without distinction of race or religion, she now seemed to extend her protection only to the Armenians.

"It was impossible to comply with England's wish to introduce reforms or to maintain order and tranquillity as long as the Armenians maintained their present attitude. His Majesty desired that good advice should be given to them; otherwise, if they persisted in their present course, the Turkish Government reserved its liberty of action."

No. 230.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 248.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 30, 1896, 10·30 A.M.*

I RECEIVED the following telegram from Vice-Consul Fontana at Kharput last night:—

"There is great fear prevalent. The Turks are all armed, and are threatening the Armenians. The weakness of the Vali, and the coldness between him and the military Commandant renders the situation more critical. A battalion of troops proceeded from here the other day to the Persian frontier.

"It is probable that the reserves who took part in the recent disturbances will be called out. It would be far more necessary if regular troops could replace that battalion."

No. 231.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 250.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 30, 1896, 5 P.M.*

CONSUL EYRES reports from Damascus by telegraph to-day that the Governor-General has been dismissed, and that the Governor-General of Beyrout is acting. A demand for inquiry and arbitration has been addressed to the local authorities by the Druses. Mr. Eyres thinks that now that the Governor-General is removed the question will be settled peacefully.

No. 232.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 113.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 492, Confidential, of the 24th instant, I concur in your opinion that it would be inexpedient for Mr. Fitzmaurice to hold an official position on the Commission which is to proceed to Birejik in connection with the recent forced conversions to Islamism.

Do you feel satisfied that all possible precautions to insure his safety has been adopted?

No. 233.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Herbert.

(No. 172.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 30, 1896.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 497 of the 25th instant relative to the serious position of affairs at Diarbekir.

The representations which you made on the subject to the Sultan and to the Turkish Government, and your language in urging the dismissal of the Vali, are entirely approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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